

CONTEXTUALIZING THE 'INNER'
PRETENSE AND ASPECT IN WITTGENSTEIN, LOHENSTEIN, AND GOETHE

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Abstract

Pretense, or the opposite of sincerity, is the mismatch between the ‘inner’ and the ‘outer.’ This assertion is among the most effective and far-reaching conceptual shifts with which the Enlightenment marked its discontinuity with the cultural givens of early modernity. My dissertation project argues that this discontinuity can be more accurately described as a recasting. Where psychological states, affects, and emotions are at issue, this recasting insists upon the primacy of the ‘inner’ realm, and upon the necessity of understanding the ‘outer’ as an expression of an individual’s ‘inner’ nature. In other areas of thought, however, the more complex early modern conceptualizations of the relation of the ‘inner’ and the ‘outer’ are allowed to remain intact (Goethe’s *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*). By juxtaposing Wittgenstein’s late writings on the ‘inner’ and the ‘outer’ with key texts of early modern (Lohenstein’s *Agrippina* and *Sophonisbe*) and Enlightenment literature and thought, my project exposes the historical (dis)continuities that characterize the development of the ‘inner’/‘outer’ paradigm from the seventeenth through the first half of the twentieth century. More particularly, I show that Wittgenstein’s ‘final’ refutation of pretense as the grounds for skepticism of other minds points beyond the grammatical responses to it offered in his own writings to a cultural framework in which the ‘outer’ is not necessarily and primarily conceived in relation to the ‘inner’ nor in which the relation between the two ‘realms’ is thought of as being *either* authentic *or* simulated. I argue, moreover, that Wittgenstein’s refutation can have the full force of a refutation only against the background of an analysis of the early modern cultural framework and of the changes that the concept of pretense subsequently undergoes in Enlightenment literature and thought. In this way, my research not only analyzes the dislocation of the ‘inner’

realm from its primacy as well as the triangulation of the formerly binary opposition between pretense and sincerity as the fundamental aim of Wittgenstein's late philosophy, it also contributes to a more culturally situated understanding of the 'inner'/'outer' paradigm.

Readers: Professor Rüdiger Campe, Professor Hent de Vries

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Introduction: The 'Inner' and the 'Outer': Changing Conceptions of Pretense

My dissertation examines how the shifting discourse of the 'inner' and the 'outer' determines our understanding of pretense. It seeks to formulate an answer to questions that emerge out of a reading of Wittgenstein's writings on the philosophy of psychology by putting his thought into relation with literary texts from the seventeenth and the eighteenth century. Though such an arrangement of texts might, at first glance, seem counterintuitive, my argument suggests that an analysis of Wittgenstein's later philosophy in fact requires us to step outside of the philosophical discourse proper. Indeed, I want to suggest that it is only by drawing on literary sources that we shall be able to understand Wittgenstein's account of pretense, for only these sources preserve traits of the pre-Enlightenment theory—or rather, practice—of pretense that resurfaces in Wittgenstein's thinking. Let me state here that my readings are not intended to be an application of Wittgenstein's ideas to seventeenth- and eighteenth-century texts—such an anachronistic endeavor would indeed pose great methodological difficulties—but rather a culturally nuanced exegesis of Wittgenstein's account of pretense. This exegesis demonstrates that, in order to understand Wittgenstein properly, we must reach back beyond a caesura in the conceptualization of the 'inner' vis-à-vis the 'outer,' a caesura that has its origins in Enlightenment thought and culture. The caesura comes about when the culture of the Enlightenment accords a new primacy to the 'interior' realm of the self.¹ Within this context, the 'outer' also acquires a new purpose, or rather it becomes singular in its purpose, which is to give expression to the 'inner,' as opposed to something that has its origin or cause outside of the individual. That 'inner' comes to be

¹ Ursula Geitner, *Die Sprache der Verstellung: Studien zum rhetorischen und anthropologischen Wissen im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1992) 154-170.

defined, furthermore, as the individual's 'inner nature.' As such, it stands in opposition to a 'nature' that has been *affected*, for example, in the manner that the rhetor or the actor first adopts for herself the nature that she will subsequently display for others. That is, the Enlightenment effectively demands the identity of the 'inner,' so conceived, with the 'outer,' an identity that is believed to ensure that our interactions with one another are founded upon the perception and experience of our individual psychologies. And if this identity of the 'inner' and 'outer' was popularized in the Enlightenment as sincerity, that to which this sincerity stands necessarily opposed is the concept of pretense. In other words, over the course of the eighteenth century, disparities between 'outward' expression and the 'inner' psychological states to which they correspond necessarily start to look not just like mismatches, but as acts of pretense, or simulation. This development is, as my investigation will demonstrate, by no means self-evident.

Chapter One traces Wittgenstein's discussion of pretense and argues for the significance of examples from literature in understanding this discussion. Chapter Two and Three then analyze concrete literary examples, examples that I argue are paradigmatic for the understanding of the discourse of the 'inner' and 'outer' within different cultural traditions: Chapter Two focuses on the paradigmatic genre of the seventeenth century, namely the drama (with all of its concerns for the 'body' and the 'outer'), while Chapter Three takes as its object of study the paradigmatic genre of the eighteenth century, namely the novel (with all of its concerns for 'psychology' and the 'inner'). Examining these texts through the lens of the 'inner' and the 'outer' enables us not only to shed light on Wittgenstein's later philosophy, but also to account for the 'break' in paradigm between the seventeenth and the eighteenth century.

Chapter One focuses on Wittgenstein's writings on pretense after 1945. I trace Wittgenstein's dissatisfaction with his efforts throughout these writings to answer the skeptical worry about pretense to the highly peculiar iteration of the grammar of pretense from Section XI of Part Two of the *Untersuchungen*:

Verstellung ist natürlich nur ein besonderer Fall davon, daß einer, z.B., eine Schmerzäußerung von sich gibt und nicht Schmerzen hat. Wenn dies überhaupt möglich ist, warum sollte denn dabei immer Verstellung statthaben, - dieses sehr spezielle Muster auf dem Band des Lebens?

...

Ja es könnte ein Fall eintreten, in welchem wir sagen würden: »Er *glaubt*, sich zu verstellen.«

I suggest that these observations amount to Wittgenstein's 'final' refutation of skepticism with regard to pretense. At the same time, however, they must be regarded as the starting point of new line of argument, one that extends beyond the confines of his descriptive, grammatical investigations. For it is, indeed, extremely difficult to understand Wittgenstein's suggestion that there are instances of "someone's producing expressions of pain when he is not in pain" which don't qualify as instances of pretense if one approaches it from the vantage point of a post-Enlightenment culture that not only promotes sincerity, but also operates with a model of sincerity that categorically denies the possibility of a legitimate 'split' between the 'inner' and the 'outer.' For what would these instances look like, given that the concept "expressions of pain" presumes the presence of pain, presumes that pain and its expression are naturally and *always* linked, such that the clause "someone's producing expressions of pain when he is not in pain" must turn out to be paradoxical? Chapter One concludes by suggesting that we can perhaps begin to recognize the force of Wittgenstein's refutation if we juxtapose his writings with an analysis of seventeenth-century models of understanding and perception.

In sum, my guiding questions include the following: why does Wittgenstein's focused discussion of aspect perception in Section XI of Part Two of the *Investigations* begin to drift into a discussion of meaning and aesthetics before ending with a series of remarks about pretense? What, if anything, does the phenomenon of aspect perception have to do with the psychological concept of pretense? And how, in particular, are we meant to understand the tone and apparent contradiction of the above-quoted observation from near the very end of Section XI?

Chapter Two may be seen as an attempt to offer both cultural contexts and examples for Wittgenstein's final refutation of the skeptical worry about pretense. Picking up where Chapter One leaves off, I suggest that Daniel Casper von Lohenstein's dramas about *Agrippina* and *Sophonisbe* may be read as paradigmatic examples of an approach to pretense that understands it neither as the binary dispositive of sincerity nor as the *only* possible explanation for incongruences of 'outward' behavior and expression and 'inner' psychological states. In addition to a consideration of the language used to describe pretense, my reading of *Agrippina* advances a typology of the different kinds of pretense in which the characters engage. The analysis of *Agrippina* concludes with an examination of the *Reyen* that closes the play's third act—the *Reyen* in which the mountain goddesses' assumption that the cause of Agrippina's shipwreck lies hidden beneath the sea surface prevents them from recognizing the shipwreck staged at its surface for what it really is. I show, moreover, that the text clearly marks the mountain goddesses' reliance upon a conventional, vertical model of pretense as an interpretive flaw, and argues instead for the sea goddesses' horizontal reading of surfaces. Indeed, my suggestion is that the third *Reyen* is the place where the text presents its own anti-

metaphysical theory of deception: a theory that explicitly locates the ‘truth’ of behavior not in the depth or ‘inner’ of the sea, but in the circumstances at its surface, a theory which might profitably be applied to the concrete cases of dissimulation that the drama presents on stage.

My second example of a seventeenth-century text in which pretense and sincerity are clearly not understood to be binary opposites of one another is Lohenstein’s *Sophonisbe*. I suggest that the text of *Sophonisbe* deploys clothing and the trope of cross-dressing to stage situations that undercut the possibility of differentiating between the perceptual surface and its would-be opposite: the ‘inner’ realm behind the surface of the ‘body,’ where meaning and truth are often taken to reside. Reading through the play, one cannot but notice the frequency with which the characters cross-dress. And though we might be tempted to read these acts as attempts to disguise the ‘inner’ and to deceive the other, Lohenstein’s heroine cautions against such a conclusion. Noting that social rituals and circumstances often require individuals to wear clothing that fails to match their bodies, she asserts, in effect, that *not all disguises are disguises*. My analysis of *Sophonisbe* seeks to develop this observation through readings of the scenes in which the Numidian queen appears on stage already in drag only to almost immediately reveal her ‘real’ ‘sex’ as well as her name.

Chapter Three answers the initial question about the unity of Section XI of Part Two of the *Untersuchungen*. It demonstrates, moreover, that even as the eighteenth century decried pretense as the opposite of sincerity—an assertion that necessarily insists upon a depth, or vertical, model of understanding that locates meaning in the ‘inner’ rather than the ‘outer’—Enlightenment thinkers often continued to subscribe to a surface,

or horizontal, model of understanding in other fields of inquiry. My paradigmatic example of the continued relevance of this surface model in the eighteenth century is Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. Goethe, as Ursula Geitner has noted, vociferously attacks pretense and rhetoric.² And yet, the project of *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* to undermine the distinction between *Schein* and *Wirklichkeit* effectively amounts to an endorsement of the surface over the depth model of understanding. The initial statement of this endorsement is the narrator's contention that what Eduard apprehends when he peers out from the moss hut is not a landscape, but pictures, and that these pictures are pictures because the baron sees the grounds of his estate always already presented within an intangible frame that is both inside of and temporally co-emergent with the pictures that generate it. By locating the frame within the representational confines of the pictures, the narrator effectively redefines what is traditionally considered to be external and irrelevant to the determination of meaning as internal and integral to that process. I show that the *Wahlverwandtschaften*'s notion of picture maps—according to Wittgenstein himself—onto the concept of aspect, and that Goethe's concept of an immaterial frame located within the picture does the work attributed by Wittgenstein to meaning-determining contexts, or circumstances. Thus, in both the *Wahlverwandtschaften* and Section XI of the *Untersuchungen*, the surface model of understanding and perception also realigns the definition of the 'inner' to the 'outer.' The analysis of Goethe's novel thus allows us to suggest a solution to one of the questions with which I began my study. The answer to the question of what connects aspect perception to pretense in Section XI of Part Two of the *Untersuchungen* is precisely the issue of how to understand the role of context, of the surroundings, of the circumstances in any determination of meaning and perception. It is

² Ursula Geitner, *Die Sprache der Verstellung*, 1.

the question, in other words, of whether the context of the seen object or perceived action, the circumstances of the other's expression of pain is internal or external to the ascertainment of its meaning. As such, the exploration affirms the conjecture, put forth in Chapter One, that Wittgenstein's discussion of aspect in Section XI works to prepare his readers for the paradoxical iteration of the grammar of pretense that closes those remarks.

Chapter One: Wittgenstein, Skepticism, and Pretense

1 The Skeptical Worry about Pretense in Wittgenstein's Writings

As his notebooks show, Wittgenstein begins as early as 1936 to work on arguments against the skeptical anxiety about other minds on the grounds that because others sometimes render themselves inaccessible to me by forgoing expression or by pretending, it is perhaps always the case that they are only pretending, for example, to be in pain, and that I can therefore never know with certainty whether others are *actually* in pain. The published draft of Part One of the *Philosophische Untersuchungen*, which collects Wittgenstein's thinking from 1929-1945, only once moves to delimit the threat of pretense at §§249-250. But Wittgenstein's writings from 1946 until his death in 1951—writings which include what has been published as Part Two of the *Philosophische Untersuchungen*—suggest that he became centrally preoccupied with the philosophy of psychology, and in particular, with finding an adequate response to the worry about pretense. I shall be suggesting that this concern may be understood as a project to reintroduce something like the older and now often neglected distinction between 'dissimulatio' and 'simulatio'—a distinction with which the seventeenth century still continued to operate, even as it began to use the single term "Verstellung" to refer to the two types of pretense. I show that Wittgenstein's writings from these years are designed to undo, as it were, both the Enlightenment's leveling of the conceptual ambiguity of 'Verstellung' and its narrowing of the understanding of the 'outer,' which comes to be viewed only as the expression of the 'inner.' In what follows, I trace Wittgenstein's dissatisfaction with his attempts throughout these writings to refute the validity of the skeptic's worry about pretense to the final two paragraphs of Section XI of Part Two of

the *Untersuchungen*. I suggest that Wittgenstein elaborates, with these aphorisms, what might be viewed as a ‘final’ refutation of the skeptical worry about pretense. At the same time, the aphorisms mark the starting point of another line of reasoning that cannot be contained within the limits of philosophical project. That is, his refutation points beyond his own writings to a cultural system in which the ‘outer’ is not only conceived only in terms of its ability represent the ‘inner.’

2 The (Effective) Bracketing Off of Pretense: Albritton, Malcolm, and Cavell on Wittgensteinian Criteria

Unlike the Wittgenstein of Part One of the *Untersuchungen*, certain of his interpreters, from Rogers Albritton and Norman Malcolm to Gordon Baker and P.M.S Hacker to “criterialists” in general, seem to be haunted by concerns about pretense.¹ Now, this concern is perhaps not surprising, given that these readers take Wittgenstein to be centrally interested in offering a refutation of skeptical doubt about other minds.² For, as Stanley Cavell has observed, it is only such an understanding that leads Albritton and Malcolm, on whom, following Cavell, I shall focus, to make the claims that they do for Wittgenstein’s notion of criteria.³ What claims are these? For Albritton and Malcolm, Wittgensteinian criteria are the means by which I can judge and know *with certainty* that the other is in a particular psychological state. As such, criteria are to be contrasted with

¹ John McDowell, “Criteria, Defeasibility, and Knowledge,” *Meaning, Knowledge, and Reality* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1998) 369-394, here: 379-380. With the exception of Norman Malcolm, McDowell considers all three of the other thinkers I have named to be criterialists. As will become clear in the discussion of Albritton and Malcolm, the criterial position views the threat of pretense as proof of the defeasibility of criteria. McDowell points out that for this to be the case, the criterialist must assume that when someone has succeeded in a dissimulation, she has managed to satisfy the criteria for a pretended ‘inner’ state without being in the state. McDowell contests this view of pretense.

² McDowell, “Criteria, Defeasibility, and Knowledge,” 369

³ Stanley Cavell, *The Claim of Reason: Wittgenstein, Skepticism, Morality, and Tragedy* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999) 7, 37. Hereinafter, I will cite this study parenthetically as Cavell.

Wittgensteinian symptoms, which are only empirically correlated to phenomena. Here is how Albritton and Malcolm put it respectively in their early and seminal responses to the *Untersuchungen*:

A criterion for a given thing's being so is something that can show the thing to be so and show by its absence that the thing is not so; it is something by which one may be *justified in saying* that the thing is so and by whose absence one may be justified in saying that the thing is not so.⁴

Those features [of someone's circumstances and behavior that *settle* the question of whether the words (e.g., 'He is calculating in this head') rightly apply to him] constitute the 'criterion' of calculating in one's head. What is necessary is that there should be something on the basis of which we judge whether he has that knowledge. . . . If someone says, e.g. 'I feel confident . . .,' . . . There must be behavioral manifestation of the feeling of confidence (579). There must be behavior against which his words . . . can be checked, if it is to be possible to judge that he does not understand them. . . . What makes something into a symptom of y is that experience teaches that it is always or usually associated y; that so-and-so is the criterion of y is a matter, not of experience, but of "definition." The satisfaction of the criterion y establishes It will not make sense for one to suppose that another person is not in pain if one's criterion of his being in pain is satisfied . . .⁵

From the above two quotations, it is evident that Albritton and Malcolm view criteria as being epistemologically prior to the states for which they serve as an "incorrigible" (Malcolm) kind of evidence. This way of relating 'inner' states to their outward criteria shares with the traditional epistemologist the assumption that while the other's body and behavior are observable and therefore readily available to my judgment, her unobservable mind escapes my grasp.⁶ Note, however, that while both Albritton and Malcolm consider criteria to be *necessarily* linked to the state for which they stand as outward criteria, this

⁴ Rogers Albritton, "On Wittgenstein's Use of the Term 'Criterion,'" *Wittgenstein: The Philosophical Investigations*, ed. George Pitcher (Notre Dame, IN: U of Notre Dame P, 1968) 231-250, here: 243-44. Hereinafter, I will cite this essay parenthetically as Albritton.

⁵ Norman Malcolm, "Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*," *Wittgenstein: The Philosophical Investigations*, ed. George Pitcher (Notre Dame, IN: U of Notre Dame P, 1968) 65-103, here: 83-84. Hereinafter, I will cite this essay parenthetically as Malcolm.

⁶ See McDowell, "Criteria, Defeasibility, and Knowledge," 382 and Edward Witherspoon, "Wittgenstein on Criteria and the Problem of Other Minds," *The Oxford Handbook of Wittgenstein*, ed. Oskari Kuusela and Marie McGinn (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2011) 472-498, especially 473-475 and 482.

link is not an internal one. Indeed, for Albritton, behavioral and verbal criteria for toothache provide a “conventional” justification for attributing toothache to someone (Albritton 236). For Malcolm, “pain-behavior” amounts to the “definition[al]” basis upon which I can ground my conclusion that the other is in pain (Malcolm 84-85).⁷

It is easy to see how the certainty that was to be guaranteed by the “conventional” or “definitional” nature of criteria can become undone by the possibility of pretense and pretend. Albritton acknowledges the possibility of the latter when, having asked us to “suppose that a man sits rocking miserably back and forth, holding his jaw, . . . pushing at a loose tooth . . . with certain kinds of grimaces and sharp intakes of breath,” he concedes: “[u]nder a variety of kinds of circumstances I would not be justified by this behavior in saying that the man had a toothache” (Albritton 245). We are meant to understand the “variety of kinds of circumstances” to include those such as the rehearsal of a role within a play, a classroom demonstration at a dental school, or a prank among friends, etc. But as these sorts of circumstances count as “exceptional,” the implication is that they can be set to one side. Albritton continues: “Normally, I would be justified by this behavior in saying that the man had a toothache. A man who behaves in this manner, under normal circumstances, always or almost always is so behaving because he has a

⁷ Wittgenstein first distinguishes between criteria and symptoms in *The Blue Book* within the context of an analysis of how to determine, or know, that something is the case. There it becomes clear that criteria are for Wittgenstein the characteristics by which a phenomenon is defined. By contrast, symptoms are features that can be empirically correlated to the phenomenon. See Ludwig Wittgenstein, *The Blue and Brown Books: Preliminary Studies for the ‘Philosophical Investigations’* (New York: Harper and Row, 1958) 24-25. Though Wittgenstein frequently appeals to criteria in Part One of the *Untersuchungen*, symptoms are only mentioned twice in the text, at §§271 and 352. For a detailed discussion of criteria, see Eduard Witherspoon, “Wittgenstein on Criteria and the Problem of Other Minds,” 473-475, 482-487. Wittgenstein would seem to assert such a view of pain-behavior and criteria when he remarks, for example, at the much interpreted and much contested PU §580, a passage also cited by Malcolm in his review, that “[e]in ›innerer‹ Vorgang bedarf äußere Kriterion.” For Malcolm’s discussion of the incorrigibility of expressions of sensations, see “Wittgenstein’s Philosophical Investigations,” *Wittgenstein: The Philosophical Investigations*, ed. George Pitcher (Notre Dame: U of Notre Dame P, 1966) 65-103, here: 81-83 as well as his “Direct Perception,” *Knowledge and Certainty: Essays and Lectures* (New York: Prentice Hall, 1963) 73-95, especially 77-86.

toothache” (245). The “always or almost always” of this last sentence enables Albritton to acknowledge the possibility of pretense. But one might say that the real purpose of the adverbial language in these two sentences is to allow him, as much as possible, to bracket off the human capacity for pretend and pretense to encroach upon or undo the cognitive purchase of criteria. For if Albritton has thus far been careful to assert only that criteria tell us “necessary truths” about the other—i.e. tell us only whether or not *we are justified* in concluding that the other is in a particular psychological state, but not whether the other is *in fact* in that state—by what is effectively the end of his analysis of criteria, the qualification that what is at stake are *only* my justifications for saying something about the other has effectively been emptied of meaning. Albritton concludes: “That a man behaves in a certain manner, under certain circumstances, can entail that he *almost certainly* has a toothache. (But this way of putting it may be very misleading, since what I would ordinarily be justified in saying, by the fact that a man almost certainly has a toothache, in this sense, is ‘*He has a toothache*’ or even ‘*I know he has a toothache*’)” (Albritton 246).⁸

Unlike Albritton, Malcolm moves much earlier in his argument to cordon off the possibilities for pretend and pretense to compromise the ability of criteria to secure knowledge. He does this by asserting, in contrast to Albritton, that “propositions that describe the criterion of his [sc. the other’s] being in pain” do not, for Wittgenstein, “*logically imply* the proposition ‘He is in pain’?” That is, even “[i]f we come upon a man

⁸ The general tone of nervous equivocation within the passage is a telling sign that Albritton’s anti-skeptical criterial project ultimately fails under the threat of pretense. Albritton acknowledges as much in the “Postscript” added to the 1966 version of the essay, when he renounces his original assertion that Wittgenstein understands a man who displays the specified behavior for a toothache under normal circumstances to also have a toothache as necessary truth. Nonetheless, Albritton continues to maintain that demonstrated criteria for psychological states justify the attribution of these states to the other (247-250). For a discussion that juxtaposes Albritton’s take on criteria with that of John McDowell’s, see Edward Witherspoon, “Wittgenstein on Criteria and the Problem of Other Minds,” 475-478.

exhibiting violent pain-behavior”—i.e. a man who “satisfies” the criteria for pain—still “[something could] show that he is not in pain.” One might ask how these two apparently contradictory things can possibly both be the case. According to Malcolm, the explanation lies in the fact that “[a] criterion is satisfied only in certain circumstances.”

For Malcolm, such circumstances are captured by the following examples:

[a man] is rehearsing a play; or he has been hypnotized . . . ; . . . or he has been narrowly missed by a car and as soon as a sum for damages has been pressed into his hand, his pain-behavior ceases and he laughs at the hoax . . . The expressions of pain are a criterion of pain in certain “surroundings,” not in others.” (85)

Of the few thinkers who engage the question of pretense in Wittgenstein without also moving immediately to downplay, qualify, or contain the threat it poses to our ability to know other minds, Stanley Cavell remains the most significant. Writing both about Albritton and Malcolm, but directing his attack primarily on the latter, Cavell objects in Chapter Two of *The Claim to Reason* to the two thinkers’ attempts to secure the evidentiary value of criteria by withdrawing from consideration those cases in which the presence of criteria such as pain-behavior point to the existence of pain where there proves to be only the *illusion* of pain.⁹ Cavell of course acknowledges that, in limiting the applicable cases only to those involving “certain circumstances” but not others, Malcolm does only that which Wittgenstein himself does repeatedly throughout the *Untersuchungen*: namely, remind the reader that the criteria for a variety of things, activities, and psychological states—including reading, drawing an ellipsis, following a rule, pain, intention—are criteria “only in certain circumstances.”¹⁰ But Cavell maintains that though the circumstances to which Wittgenstein alludes are varied and many, none

⁹ See Cavell’s chapter on “Criteria and Skepticism” in *The Claim of Reason*, 37-47. John McDowell can be seen to make a similar objection in “Criteria, Defeasibility, and Knowledge.”

¹⁰ Stanley Cavell, *The Claim of Reason*, 42.

pertain to situations involving pretend or pretense.¹¹ Is this observation right? And is Malcolm wrong? And what, moreover, are the stakes of their argument?

Let me begin with Cavell's observation, which is not entirely correct. I have said that Wittgenstein moves only once in Part One of the *Untersuchungen* to address the worry about pretense. Given this, it is striking that almost a dozen other passages from Part One—passages that also deal with the question of criteria—should touch upon or raise in passing the issue of lying or pretense or deception (§§156, 159, 227-229, 638, 652, 667-668, 674). One might conjecture that though Wittgenstein does not engage with threat of deception directly in these passages, deception is on his mind. Let us, however, proceed with Cavell's argument. It is that: if the other exhibits pain-behavior—Cavell's word is "presence"—then the criteria for pain have been "satisfied"—Cavell notes that "satisfied" is Malcolm's word, not Wittgenstein's (Cavell 41)—and we are required to conclude that the other is in pain, *unless what the other was doing was not expressing pain*, but "clearing his throat, calling his hamsters, responding to a bad joke (which would be *mock* pain-behavior, not feigned pain-behavior)" (Cavell 43). According to Cavell, it is to these sorts of circumstances that Wittgenstein refers, and only these sorts of circumstances, in which pain and its expression are clearly not what is at stake, which may legitimately be excluded from an analysis of the efficacy of criteria such as pain-behavior to determine with certainty that the other has pain. Cavell takes this (the necessary *inclusion* of the very cases of pretend and pretense that Malcolm would have us exclude) to mean two things. The first is that there exist no distinct criteria for pretend or feigned pain "over and above" the criteria for real or actual pain. That is, there exists nothing that would allow us in any particular case in which the other exhibits pain-

¹¹ Stanley Cavell, *The Claim of Reason*, 43.

behavior to distinguish the existence of real pain from its absence. In both kinds of cases, the fictional or fake and the real, we have only the same exact, and exact looking pain-behavior to go on.¹² And, second, Wittgensteinian criteria do not constitute the means with which to know with certainty the existence of something, say, pain. Rather, Wittgensteinian criteria enable me to determine whether a particular concept, such as that of pain, applies to a situation or person. That is, criteria answer the question not of the presence, or existence, of (e.g.) pain, but rather of how one knows that this counts as an instance, or case, of (e.g.) pain.¹³ These two things together are then

enough for [Cavell] to conclude that Wittgenstein's appeal to criteria, though it takes its importance from the problem of skepticism, is not, and is not meant to be, a refutation of skepticism That is, it does not negate the concluding thesis of skepticism, that we do not know with certainty of the existence of the external world (or of other minds). On the contrary, Wittgenstein . . . rather affirms that thesis, or rather takes it as undeniable, and so shifts its weight. What the thesis now means is something like: Our relation to the world as a whole, or to others in general, is not one of knowing, where knowing construes itself as being certain. So it is also true that we do not fail to know such things.¹⁴

¹² It should be noted that Cavell here emphasizes a point that both Albritton, and perhaps to a lesser extent Malcolm, readily acknowledge: namely, the limitation and defeasibility of criteria. Both in Part One of the *Untersuchungen* and throughout the writings on the philosophy of psychology, Wittgenstein repeatedly questions whether pain and feigned pain are expressed with the same expressive and behavioral criteria. It seems quite clear that Wittgenstein does not believe that the child learns the concepts of pain and feigned pain in the same way. There are two reasons for this. The first is that the teacher does not present them to the child as interchangeable concepts. The second is that lying and pretense are parasitic upon truthful uses of language: for Wittgenstein, they are distinct concepts that must be acquired at different points in a child's development and in different kinds of language games (PU §249-250, BPP §142-147, LSPP §§861-874, LSPP II 109a-f). See also John V. Canfield, "Pretence and the Inner," *The Third Wittgenstein: the Post-Investigations Works* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004) 145-158; Dale Jacquette, "Wittgenstein on Lying as a Language Game," *The Third Wittgenstein: the Post-Investigations Works* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004) 159-176 and Eike von Savigny, "Warum kann das Lächeln des Säuglings nicht Verstellung sein?," *Der Mensch als Mitmensch: Wittgenstein's ›Philosophische Untersuchungen‹* (München: dtv, 1996) 141-155. In contrast to Wittgenstein, John Searle views pretending and lying as the transgression of the rules of the normal language game, rather than as a separate game (*Expression and Meaning: Studies in the Theory of Speech Acts* [Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1979] 66-68).

¹³ This is the question that John Longshaw Austin takes the skeptic to be asking and himself to be answering in the essay on "Other Minds," *Philosophical Papers*, ed. James Opie Urmson and Geoffrey James Warnock, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1970) 76-116. Cf. Cavell, *The Claim of Reason*, 45, 48, 51.

¹⁴ Cavell, *The Claim of Reason*, 45, 79, 81, 83, and passim. See also Stanley Cavell, "Knowing and Acknowledging," *Must We Mean What We Say?* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002). 238-266, here: 238.

Cavell's conclusion here is highly appealing, and how could it not be, since it conceives of knowledge not as a means for certainty but as a tool for, or stepping stone toward, our acknowledgement of the other. This shift to acknowledgement, and the subsumption of knowledge to it, becomes clear by the time the reader has reached the end of Chapter Three of *The Claim of Reason*.¹⁵ For it is there that Cavell asserts that what will be required of me in the face of "the failure of criteria" and *knowledge* is an *acknowledgment* of the other. Cavell puts his understanding of this requirement as follows:

I (have to) respond to it [sc. "the other's (inner) life"], or refuse to respond. It calls upon me; it calls me out. I have to acknowledge it. I am as fated to that as I am to my body; it is as natural to me. In everyday life the lives of others are neither here nor there; they drift between their own inexpressiveness and my inaccuracy in responding to them. Sincerity is not the issue. Or rather, sincerity is nothing (is not the inspiration of trust, theirs in me or mine in myself) without the desire for accuracy and courage (Cavell 84).

Thus, one might say of Cavell, as he himself says of Wittgenstein, that he "affirms" the skeptic's position—here and elsewhere, repeatedly—only to tear it down at a later time, and from within.¹⁶

Is it possible to subscribe to Cavell's larger conclusions about the need to replace the desire to know with the willingness to acknowledge (and accept) without endorsing his immediate conclusion in Chapter Two that "the failure of criteria" with regard to

¹⁵ Cavell lays out a similar stance in "Knowing and Acknowledging," especially 256-266. The point of Cavell's reading of Wittgenstein's private language argument is to show the way in which Wittgenstein's assertion that makes it no sense to say "only I can know if I am in pain" does not preclude my acknowledgement of my pain. Acknowledgment is, for Cavell, not weaker than knowledge, indeed it encompasses knowledge. "Acknowledgement," Cavell writes, "goes beyond knowledge . . . (goes beyond . . . in its requirement that I do something or reveal something on the basis of that knowledge)" (257).

¹⁶ In his discussion of the traditional epistemologist, Cavell shows that the skeptic "'must' and 'cannot' mean what he says" (*The Claim of Reason*, 225). For Cavell, the skeptic shifts uneasily between making an illegitimate, or incomprehensible, claim that only seems, but cannot in fact endanger the validity of our everyday statements of knowledge and making a legitimate, or comprehensible, claim that will not generalize such that it contaminates all of our claims to knowledge as he wishes. See Cavell's chapter on "The Quest of Traditional Epistemology: Closing" in *The Claim of Reason*, 191-243, and James Conant, "Stanley Cavell's Wittgenstein," *The Harvard Review of Philosophy* 13.1 (2005): 51-65, especially 54-56.

pretense leads Wittgenstein to admit to the skeptic that we have no knowledge, no certainty, whatsoever about the other's 'inner' life? I think the answer is yes. For though Wittgenstein, as I read him, certainly seeks to shift our understanding of our relation to others, it is not *only* away from knowledge as certainty per se, but also away from the insistence upon the *kind* of certainty that we associate with something like mathematics.¹⁷ And it is to this latter end that he seeks, on my reading, repeatedly to address our misconceptions about evidence with regard to psychological states and the threat of pretense. He does so, moreover, not only by insisting that evidence and justification come to an end—famously replying to the question “[a]ber schließt Du eben nicht nur vor dem Zweifel die Augen, wenn Du sicher bist?” – Sie sind mir geschlossen.” (cf. also PU 1079; PU II 569)—but by showing us that the relevant ‘evidence’ is not necessarily to be found in the relation of *my* ‘inner’ to *my* ‘outer.’ Finally, I would add that though criteria, when falsely conceived of as proof of the ‘inner’ states for which they are criteria, may fail to enable me to distinguish between pretend or fake (e.g.) pain and actual (e.g.) pain, this does not mean that they have will have no role to play in the language-game of *knowing*, or recognizing, by means of directly seeing that the other is in a particular psychological

¹⁷ See PU 1079 and PU II xi 569. See also Ludwig Wittgenstein, “Bemerkungen über die Philosophie der Psychologie,” *Werkausgabe* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1989) vol. 7, 34, that is §137 (hereinafter, I will cite this text parenthetically as BPP with paragraph number) as well as Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Letzte Schriften über die Philosophie der Psychologie: Das Innere und das Äußere*, ed. G. H. von Wright and Heikki Nyman (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1993) 123b-c, and passim (hereinafter, I will cite this text parenthetically as LSPP II with paragraph number). – For an interpretation of PU II XI 569, see the chapter “Warum kann das Lächeln des Säuglings nicht Verstellung sein?” in Eike von Savigny, *Der Mensch als Mitmensch: Wittgenstein's 'Philosophische Untersuchungen'* (München: dtv, 1996) 141-155, especially 151-53. Austin points to the difference in certainties at which Wittgenstein is getting when he observes in the essay on “Other Minds”: “It seems likely that the cases where we know that another man thinks that 2 and 2 make 4, or that he is seeing a rat, and so on, are different in important respects from, though no doubt also similar to, the case of knowing that he is angry or hungry” (103).

state.¹⁸ For whatever it is that criteria are or do, such that they allow me to correctly apply a concept to a situation or person, they were never intended by Wittgenstein to do it on their own in the first place. This, at any rate, is my position. I register it here, despite knowing full well that Cavell will refine his stance on skepticism and pretense in the exhaustive and embodied analysis of “Skepticism and Other Minds” that he offers in Part Four of *The Claim of Reason*, offering in the process many insights into these concepts.¹⁹ And I register it, also, in order to note a distinction between Wittgenstein’s project and Cavell’s own. One might put that distinction thus: Cavell moves too readily and too quickly from the two spot-on observations he makes in Chapter Two about the ambiguity and purpose of Wittgensteinian criteria to what I will argue is, for my purposes and certain of Wittgenstein’s purposes, the premature conclusion that the “disappointment” of criteria as evidence means that we can never know with certainty whether someone is only pretending to be in pain. The rushed quality of his acquiescence to the skeptic of other minds is revealed in the fact that Cavell, and those who embrace his work on Wittgenstein,²⁰ overlook what might be argued are key passages on pretense in the *Untersuchungen*: not only §§249-250 but also almost all of the closing remarks of Section XI of Part Two, as well as almost all of Wittgenstein’s remarks about pretense in the writings on the philosophy of psychology.

¹⁸ For a detailed analysis of Cavell’s understanding of how we come to attribute to the other a particular psychological state, whether by interpretation or by directly perceiving the state, see Stephen Mulhall, *On Being in the World: Wittgenstein and Heidegger on Seeing Aspects* (London: Routledge, 1990) 78-90.

¹⁹ Let me clarify this “despite . . .” while I may not ultimately disagree with Cavell on very many points, I do disagree with him about how Wittgenstein gets to some of those points.

²⁰ A good example is Stephen Mulhall’s excellent book on *Wittgenstein’s Private Language: Grammar, Nonsense, and Imagination in Philosophical Investigations*, §§243-315 (Oxford: Clarendon P, 2007). Drawing upon the thought of Cavell among others, Mulhall offers a detailed series of “resolute” and “substantial” readings of the opening passages of the private language argument, readings that also take into account the “rhetorical registers” of Wittgenstein’s exchanges with the interlocutor. It should be noted that while Mulhall gives an account of §§243, 244-245, 248, 251-252, 253, etc., he skips over 249-250.

To see why Cavell's skeptical concession of knowledge need not follow from his insightful observations about the purpose and ambiguous reach of Wittgensteinian criteria, one need only consider that which Cavell himself takes to be so important: namely, my acknowledgement, or response, to the other's pain-behavior. Precisely such a consideration, in the face of criterial limitation, allows us, moreover, to recoup what is valuable and correct in Malcolm's original instinct to direct attention to (though not to bracket off) those cases in which the other's pretend or fake pain-behavior occurs in the context of a rehearsal for a play, or at a magic show where he has been hypnotized, or as part of a hoax to extract money from someone. For if, as Cavell argues, I am "call[ed] out" (Cavell 84) by the other's pain-behavior, then does it not count for something that my response to the other will vary greatly, depending on whether he pretends to be in pain while on stage or with the aim of duping me out of my money in court? Do we not desire and value the actor's convincing portrayal of Hamlet's pain while condemning the hoaxer's exhibition of his own? And doesn't precisely this difference in our responses to the other's pain-behavior show that it would be profitable to reintroduce, *at this stage* of the analysis of pretense and Wittgensteinian criteria, which are no longer conceived of as evidence for the existence of the other's particular psychological state, Malcolm's original impetus to point to the range of circumstances in which someone who is not in pain might manifest the criteria for pain (Malcolm 85-86)?²¹ For is it not the particular

²¹ Stephen Mulhall makes the same point in *On Being in the World*. He writes: "Another sense of 'context' that is relevant here is the sense that our application of a specific psychological concept to a given facet of human behaviour is grammatically related to the antecedents and consequences of that behaviour - in such a way that identical behaviour, when embedded in different 'narrative' backgrounds, carries very different psychological significance. A child who is crying because she fell over and grazed her knee would thereby be manifesting pain, but the same behaviour on the part of a child who has lost her mother would be a manifestation of anxiety. In these examples, it becomes clear that treating human behaviour as a manifestation of one psychological state rather than another is equivalent to regarding it as an intelligible human response to the circumstances embodied in the relevant background." (63 and *passim*)

surroundings and circumstances in which I encounter the other's expressions of pain that enable me to know what behavioral criteria of pain alone cannot tell me: namely, whether the other only pretends or fakes his pain, or whether he really is in pain? For though both the actor and the hoaxer produce expressions that fulfill the criteria for pain, don't the circumstances, doesn't "what happen[s] before and after" the latter's displays of pain—namely, that as soon as he has received compensation for his suffering, "his pain behavior ceases and he laughs" (PU §34)—tell us that he was not actually in pain? And we would not, after all, say of the actor that he is neither in pain or nor feigning pain. Neither of these categories applies to him, although he exhibits expressions of pain, although his behavior meets the criteria for pain, which are the same criteria for feigned pain.²²

Cavell does, at one point in Chapter Two, acknowledge that Malcolm is "right[]" to point to the circumstances of illusion as the explanation for the presence of behavior criteria for pain in the absence of pain, as the explanation for why someone who displays pain-behavior, is not in fact in pain. Cavell had insisted, however, that Malcolm is motivated to do so for "the wrong reasons" (Cavell 45). As Cavell then went on to elaborate:

In calling a piece of behavior "pain-behavior", you must already have included the circumstances under which the behavior (e.g., groaning) *is* pain-behavior (and not, e.g. comic- or calling behavior); and so the phrase "only in certain circumstances", used, as Malcolm does, as an explanation or concession, will not do what Malcolm wishes it to do; that is, it does not explain why certain criteria which, by hypothesis, or by description, are of *pain* are (sometimes) not of actual pain, existing pain. (Indeed, what the concession in fact amounts to is this: behavior which, under certain circumstances, is a criterion of pain, is under those

²² In "Criteria, Defeasibility, and Knowledge," John McDowell points out that for Wittgenstein what counts as a criterion for an activity (or psychological state) in one set of circumstance will not be, or not necessarily be, a criterion for that same activity (or state) in another surrounding (376-78).

very circumstances not a criterion of pain. And so the apparent contradiction turns out to be a real one.)²³

As Cavell's point, at that stage of his argument, had been to insist that pain-behavior is a criterion for pain only in circumstances in which that behavior amounts to an *expression*, his objection needed to be recognized as valid. What's odd is that, having narrowed the relevant circumstances to include only and all cases involving pain-expression, Cavell should not then go on to acknowledge the circumstances to which Malcolm points as an explanation for why, despite the presence of behavioral criteria for pain, someone is not in pain. It's odd that Cavell should continue, at this end stage of his argument, to collapse the notion of the circumstances in which the pain-behavior gets expressed onto the notion of the pain-behavior itself. That he does so is apparent from the skeptical conclusion he draws, given "the failure of criteria," that we can never know with certainty if the other is only pretending or faking his pain. And in doing so, in choosing to ignore the relevance of the circumstances—and here I can't help but suspect that Cavell does this knowingly; at the very least, he does it in spite of his own emphasis on the importance of circumstances elsewhere in *The Claim of Reason*²⁴—and to accept that pretense is a "rational," "standing," and "[un]answer[able]" threat to all expression (47), Cavell in effect does something not dissimilar to what I earlier accused Albritton and Malcolm of doing. Indeed, we might say that where the latter two seek to bracket off the threat of pretense in order to secure the 'absolute' knowledge that is meant

²³ Cavell, *The Claim of Reason*, 43-44. McDowell puts the same point this way: "But when Wittgenstein speaks of dependence on circumstances, what he says seems to permit a different reading: not that some condition, specified in terms that are applicable independently of establishing a claim, is a criterion for the claim anyway, though whether it warrants the claim depends on further circumstances, but that whether such a condition is a criterion or not depends on the circumstances" ("Criteria, Defeasibility, and Knowledge," 377).

²⁴ I have in mind, for example, Cavell's reflections upon the surroundings or circumstances in which one would be moved to confess that one expects an explosion as well as the "Excursus on Wittgenstein's Vision of Language." In that chapter, Cavell offers a reading of what Wittgenstein might mean when he says that words are learned in context before then going on to discuss how we go about projecting words into additional contexts (*The Claim of Reason*, especially 104-108 and Chapter Seven).

to come with criterial evidence, Cavell seeks to bracket off *everything but* pretense in order to secure the skeptical conclusion that certain knowledge of other minds remains unavailable to me.

On the basis of the above analysis, it might look as if I am suggesting that when criterial expressions and behaviors for a psychological state are supplemented by a consideration of the particular circumstances, or contexts, in which they occur, we can successfully, i.e. fully, mitigate “the failure of criteria[l evidence]” (Cavell 44) that would otherwise allow pretense to threaten our knowledge of other minds. For, assuming that we are in a position to know that the other is in pain in the first place, the combination of criteria and the circumstances in which they take place allows us to establish in a particular case, or at any rate in the cases that Albritton wants us to imagine and the three cases that Malcolm brings, whether or not the individuals were only pretending to be in pain. The following section, which seeks to align my contextualized approach to criteria with J. L. Austin’s treatment of pretense, and his treatment with one of the lines of argument that Wittgenstein develops against the skeptical attitude toward other minds, makes clear that I do not take this contextualized solution, by itself, to be a satisfying response to the problem of pretense. It should be noted, as well, that although the argument of Wittgenstein’s at which we will look in Section 3.2 is not to be jettisoned, neither does it constitute his ‘final’ one: that is, it does not enable him to calm the worry about pretense and to stop writing about it.

3 *The Empirical Response to Pretense*

3.1 *J. L. Austin's "Other Minds"*

To stave off Cavell's rushed surrender to the skeptic about other minds, I proposed that criteria might be rehabilitated if the expressions and behaviors of psychological states are considered within the contexts in which they are manifested. I want now to propose that the suggestion may be seen as constitutive of an approach to pretense that gets its fuller elaboration by someone such as J. L. Austin in his 1946 essay on "Other Minds."²⁵

Toward the end of that essay, in response to the question about whether someone who manifests all the criteria of anger, may "yet (still) *not really be angry*," Austin observes matter-of-factly that

[i]n everyday life, [problems of pretense, along with those of misunderstanding and inadvertence] arise in special cases, and occasion genuine worry. . . . All three varieties of worry may arise, and often do, in connexion with the actions of persons whom we know very well.²⁶

Austin's characterization of pretense contrasts starkly with Albritton's, Malcolm's, and Cavell's. Unlike them, he considers pretense to be an ordinary, "everyday" matter. If pretense arises for Austin in "special cases"—which I take to mean something like specific situations, it is nonetheless not special. It is true that Austin regards the worry

²⁵ Austin, "Other Minds," 105. Stanley Cavell devotes many pages and all of Chapter Three of *The Claim of Reason* to Austin's piece. As Cavell is primarily concerned to contrast, on the one hand, Austin's use of specialized objects such as goldfinches and anger to answer the question of how one can know that an object is a goldfinch or that a particular emotion is the expression of anger with, on the other hand, the skeptic's interest in generic objects to answer the question how one can know that something—chairs, wax, sensations—exists. As such, Cavell focuses his discussion primarily on the first half of Austin's essay.

²⁶ Austin, "Other Minds," 112. Note that instead of the criteria of anger, Austin speaks of the demonstration of "the symptoms and (displays and everything else) of anger" (111). The usage of this phrase has partly to do with the fact that Austin's essay addresses concerns laid out by John Wisdom, who himself uses the term "symptoms" of feelings in opposition to the "feelings" themselves, which are hidden from view. Against Wisdom, Austin asks us to consider that "'[s]ymptoms' or 'signs' of anger tend to mean signs of rising or of suppressed anger." In ordinary usage, Austin notes, "'[s]ymptoms' are not . . . contrasted with the man's own inner personal feeling of anger, but rather with the actual display of anger. Normally at least, where we have only symptoms to go upon, we should say only that we *believe* that the man is angry or getting angry: whereas when he has given himself away we say that we *know*" (107-108).

about pretense as potentially contributing to the kind of “loneliness” that may come over me in those instances when I feel that communication between me and the other has broken down. It is for this reason that Austin lumps deception in with worries about whether I may after all be wrong in assuming that the other shares my views, wrong in believing that she would react as I would, and wrong in my attributions of intention to her. But nowhere does Austin indicate that concerns about pretense, misunderstanding, and intention are metaphysical anxieties that endure or render knowledge of the other logically impossible. The worries come, but for Austin they also dissipate. The reason for this is that there exist

established procedures for dealing with suspected cases of deception or of misunderstanding or of inadvertence. By these means we do very often establish (though we do not expect always to establish) that someone is acting, or that we were misunderstanding . . . These special cases where doubts arise and require resolving, are contrasted with the normal cases which hold the field unless there is some special suggestion that deceit, &c., is involved, and deceit, moreover, of an intelligible kind in the circumstances, that is, of a kind that can be looked into because motive, &c., is specially suggested. There is no suggestion that I never know what other people’s emotions are, nor yet that in particular cases I might be wrong for no special reason or in no special ways . . .

Extraordinary cases of deceit, misunderstanding . . . do not ordinarily occur: we have a working knowledge of the occasions for, the temptations to, the practical limits of, and the normal types of deceit and misunderstanding. Nevertheless, they may occur, and there may be varieties which are common without our yet having become aware of the fact. If this happens, we are in a certain sense wrong . . . and shall have to revise our ideas and terminology. This we are constantly ready to do . . .²⁷

As the above paragraphs make clear, Austin understands the doubt associated with pretense to be of an empirical nature.²⁸ Deception, and the doubt that it occasions, arise, but they do so against the backdrop of those many instances in which language is employed truthfully.

Where deception does come into play, it expresses itself in *localized cases* in which

²⁷ Austin, “Other Minds,” 112-13.

²⁸ One might say that this is in effect Cavell’s point when he seeks to draw the distinction between Austin’s interest in the identity of specific objects and the skeptic’s concern with the existence of generic objects.

something in the circumstances of the events gives us concrete reason not to doubt generally, but specifically with regard to “motive, &c.” It’s important to note, also, that Austin takes us to be in a position to “resolve” the kinds of doubts that arise not only from standard, or “normal,” run-of-the-mill kinds of pretense, but also “extraordinary cases of it.” This is because our concept of pretense is a flexible one, without strictly drawn boundaries.

3.2 One Strand of Wittgenstein’s Empirical Answer to Doubt on the Grounds of Pretense

To the extent that Austin’s account of pretense conveys the impression that pretense is a practical problem that surfaces in circumscribed instances, it is reminiscent of a set of tactics that Wittgenstein frequently adopts throughout the writings after 1946 in response to the skeptic who worries about whether “ein Mensch wirklich dies Gefühl hat oder sich nur so stellt” (BPP §137). Consider, for example, the following responses to these questions:

Bin ich wirklich immer im Ungewissen darüber, ob Einer wirklich zornig, traurig, . . ., etc. ist? Nein. . . In *gewissen Fällen* bin ich in Unsicherheit darüber, ob der Andere Schmerzen hat oder nicht, ich ruhe z.B. nicht sicher in meinem Mitleid mit ihm und keine Äußerung kann diese Unsicherheit beheben. . . . (BPP §137)

“Ich kann nie *wissen*, was in ihm vorgeht: *er* weiß es immer.” Ja, wenn man philosophisch denkt, möchte man das sagen. Aber welcher Sachlage entspricht diese Aussage? Wir hören täglich, daß der Eine vom Andern sagt, er habe Schmerzen, sei traurig . . . ohne die Spur des Zweifels; und verhältnismäßig selten, daß man nicht wisse, was in ihm vorgeht . . . (BPP §138)

Es sind *ganz besondere Fälle*: in denen das Innere mir verborgen erscheint. Und die Unsicherheit, die sich so ausdrückt ist nicht eine philosophische, sondern eine praktische und primitive. (BPP II §558)

Die Unsicherheit hat ihren Grund nicht darin, daß er seine Schmerzen nicht außen am Rock trägt. Und es ist auch gar keine Unsicherheit *im besonderen Fall* . . . (BPP II 325; §621)

Die Unsicherheit, “ob der Andere Schmerzen hat” – liegt sie darin, daß er er ist und ich ich? . . . Nein; hier täuscht mich ein Bild. Die Unsicherheit ist eine *von Fall zu Fall* und das Schwanken des Begriffes. Aber das ist unser Spiel – wir

spielen es mit einem elastischen Werkzeug. (LSPP I §243; emphases mine, A.N.)²⁹

Let me begin somewhat unconventionally: by directing attention to Wittgenstein's peculiar move to oppose the notion of a philosophical uncertainty not only to the idea of a practical one, but to the idea of a practical and primitive one. For Wittgenstein, the uncertainty generated by pretense is both practical and primitive. I want to suggest that this notion of primitive will prove to be crucial to getting at Wittgenstein's analysis of pretense. But I'm getting ahead of myself, for it is in only Section 3.3 that I shall have more to say about the primitive. For now, let us turn to a more general consideration of the passages. In them, we can observe that Wittgenstein, like Austin, moves both to acknowledge the anxiety about pretense at the same time that he points out that it crops up only in clearly defined situations, against a background of language use—both linguistic and behavioral—in which uncertainty is not an issue: that, at any rate, is the effect of the phrases “von Fall zu Fall” and “in gewissen” and “ganz besondere Fälle.” Additionally, the implication of Wittgenstein's insistence that pretense takes the form of “Fälle,” or cases, will turn out to be that the concern about deception can be contained, handled or treated, studied, defined, and solved. Some of the strongest associations that the term “Fälle” brings with it are, after all, the “Fälle or “Fallstudien” of the scientific and medical, the judicial and law enforcement communities.³⁰ These associations are then underscored by comments that insist over and over again that “[d]er Begriff der

²⁹ Ludwig Wittgenstein, “Letzte Schriften über die Philosophie der Psychologie,” *Werkausgabe* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1989) vol. 7, 385, that is I §243. Hereinafter, I will cite this text parenthetically as LSPP I with paragraph number. See also LSPP I §270 and *passim*.

³⁰ For a brief overview of the historical context of the term ‘case,’ see Alexander Košenina, “Fallgeschichten: Von der Dokumentation zur Fiktion,” *Zeitschrift für Germanistik* Neue Folge 17 (2009): 282-287. Recall also that the doctor addresses Woyzeck as an “interessanter casus” in Georg Büchner, “Woyzeck,” *Sämtliche Werke, Briefe und Dokumente in zwei Bänden*, ed. Henri Poschmann (Frankfurt a. M.: DKV, 1992-1999) vol. 1, 158.

Verstellung hat es mit einem praktischen Problem zu tun” (LSPP I §253)” or “[d]er Begriff ‘Verstellung’ dient praktischen Zwecken” (LSPP I §§253, 261, and *passim*).³¹ Reading on, it becomes clear that the reason why the concept of pretense addresses for Wittgenstein practical problems and purposes, as opposed to philosophical ones (BPP II §558), is the same reason Austin also deemed the concept to do so: namely, because it has relevance only in those situations in which there exist not only opportunity and motive (LSPP I §262, BPP §824, cf. also PU 1080; PU II 569-570, and *passim*), but also a particular kind of doubt.³² Consider the following observation, which comes at LSPP I §270:

Der Begriff der Verstellung dient praktischen Problemen. D.h.: Wenn der, welcher die finstern Ränke schmiedet, nichts als Gutes und Herrliches hervorbringt, bis er dann einmal die finstere Tat begeht, so wird das auch nur ‘theoretisch’ eine Verstellung sein; denn es sieht nicht mehr wie Verstellung aus und die Schlüsse, die man im normalen Fall aus finstern Anschlägen ziehen würde, treffen hier nicht zu.

If it is at first difficult to know how to comprehend these sentences, this is because Wittgenstein seems to want to deny what plainly must be the case: that the mismatch between a man’s ‘inner’ intentions to plot sinister intrigues and his outwardly good deeds counts as a legitimate instance of pretense. I want to suggest, however, that the answer to this apparent contradiction lies in attending to the temporality of the man’s actions. From the moment in which the man in LSPP I §270 has revealed his cards, the mismatch ceases (“nicht mehr”) to count as deception, becoming only “theoretisch eine Verstellung,” or not an instance of deception at all. This suggests that Wittgenstein takes the concept of deception to apply only in those circumstances in which the specific doubt occasioned by

³¹ See also BPP II §558 and LSPP I §270.

³² See Dale Jacquette, “Wittgenstein on Lying as a Language Game,” especially 171-173 and Stephen Mulhall, *On Being in the World*, 64.

an apparent mismatch between the ‘outer’ and the ‘inner’ of the other has yet to be resolved or remains unresolved, as is the case in the very first two paragraphs quoted in this section. For as he comments at LSPP I §§252 and 253:

Verstellung ist ja eben nur ein besonderer Fall; nur unter besonderen Umständen können wir ein Benehmen als Verstellung deuten.

Der Begriff ‘Verstellung’ hat es mit Fällen der Verstellung zu tun; also mit sehr besonderen Vorgängen und besonderen Situationen im Menschlichen Leben. Und damit meine ich äußere, nicht innere Vorgänge etc.

Also kann nicht alles Benehmen, unter allen Umständen, Verstellung sein.

And in a move that is once again similar to one of Austin’s, Wittgenstein reminds the reader that there would be no point in generating a list that takes as its goal the anticipation of all possible reasons for doubt as well as the complete enumeration of the situations and circumstances in which deception may be said or has been seen to apply. For even if such a list could be produced, it would have no practical use in a language-game of recognizing another to be (really) in one psychological state or another, a language-game that is best managed, as Wittgenstein put it in one of the previous quotes, “von Fall zu Fall” (LSPP I §973).³³

³³ Note that Wittgenstein’s insistence that the uncertainty of pretense is “eine von Fall zu Fall” and LSPP I §973 parallel those passages in the *Untersuchungen* where he seeks to distinguish between inappropriate and appropriate explanations of words and rules. Inappropriate explanations aim to resolve all potential misunderstandings, including ones that have still yet to arise, but which, it is falsely assumed, must be resolved before we can begin to understand and carry out even the simplest instructions. Appropriate explanations are occasioned by and intended to answer concrete misunderstandings. The first thing to note about appropriate explanations is that they are rarely immediately available to us. Rarely do they come rolling off the tip of the tongue. This suggests that the reasoning behind much of our behavior is inarticulate and gets explicitly formulated only as the need to do so arises, only when “wir sie [sc. an explanation] benötigen, um ein Mißverständnis zu vermeiden . . . , das ohne die Erklärung eintreten würde” (PU §87). Each explanation is given as a particular response to a particular misunderstanding. One cannot construct a string of explanations for the express purpose of following it to the end, in order to find there the securely founded knowledge of the kind hoped for by an intellectualist or foundationalist position. Knowledge, Wittgenstein tells the foundationalist, is not secured through any representations that we might possess. See PU §§86-87, 145, 168, 201, and *passim*.

3.3 Wittgenstein's Dissatisfaction with the Initial Empirical Response

Thus far, I have limited myself to drawing out the striking similarities between Austin's and Wittgenstein's attempts to allay the worries that the skeptic raises about other minds by showing that pretense is an empirical consideration that arises in specific circumstances in which there are practical, outward indications for doubt about the other. Let me state clearly that in no way do I want to suggest by my reading that there do not exist many differences between their approaches. And though it would not serve my argument to go into a detailed examination of what separates the two thinkers from one another, I would like now to direct attention to one particular difference. It turns on the tone of their remarks. In one respect, this disparity is to be reckoned with: after all, Austin's comments have been excerpted from a published essay, whereas Wittgenstein's observations have been taken from unpublished notebooks. Nonetheless, where Austin's tone reassures us that the problem of pretense is both recognizable and manageable, the insistent and restless quality of Wittgenstein's remarks suggests that he remained unsatisfied with what are effectively the same responses that Austin gives to the skeptic. And indeed, from 1946 until his death in 1951, Wittgenstein continued to fill notebook after notebook in an attempt to find a suitable reply to the skeptical position on pretense. This fact relativizes the status of what has been published as Part Two of the *Untersuchungen*. More particularly, it suggests that while those remarks demonstrate more polish and structure, they must be read along with the unpublished notebooks from which they have been partly culled. And yet, Wittgenstein's continued dissatisfaction with the remarks on skeptical inclination to doubt in the face of pretense in the notebooks is not total. For, as in the notebooks and typoscripts written prior to 1946, the repetitions

hint at points of development and possible solutions. They indicate that he considered certain observations to be worth returning to. Indeed, there are many passages, as for instance at BPP §137 and LSPP I §§255-262, in which one gets the sense that Wittgenstein feels himself to be on the right track, but that something still escapes him about the way in which the puzzle of pretense is to be fit together.

Wittgenstein's restlessness forces us to wonder about the kind of analysis of pretense, and of the doubt it engenders, he takes himself (and Austin) to have offered the skeptic in the passages at which we have been looking at in this section. The answer is: a grammatical analysis that seeks to remind us of how we ordinarily use the concepts of pretense and doubt, and of the situations to which they apply.³⁴ But that much is obvious. The better question is what kind of grammatical remarks do Wittgenstein and Austin give? What exactly are they reminding the skeptic about when they assert that the concept of pretense, and the uncertainty that comes with it, is practical, as opposed to theoretical and philosophical (BPP §138, LSPP I §255-256, and *passim*), and requires for there not only to be a discrepancy between the 'inner' and the 'outer' of the other, but also discernible indications of opportunity, motive, and still unsettled doubt in the "äußere, nicht innere Vorgänge und Situationen" (LSPP I §§252)? I want to suggest that the force of these remarks is two-fold. They indicate, firstly, that if my skeptical disquietude is motivated by the possibility of pretense, then my disquietude does not turn on a difference in knowledge between the other and myself (LSPP §893-894). In these instances of worry, the worry cannot be that she has knowledge about herself that I can't have. This means that the worry is not the standing, unconditional, metaphysical anxiety

³⁴ At PU §90 Wittgenstein writes: "Unsere Betrachtung ist daher eine grammatische." For a discussion of Wittgenstein's grammatical approach, see Cavell, *The Claim of Reason*, 70-72, and Eike von Savigny, *Der Mensch als Mitmensch: Wittgenstein's 'Philosophische Untersuchungen'* (München: dtv, 1996) 141-146.

about the separateness of our bodies and minds. Rather, the worry about the possibility of deception is a localized worry that arises only where something about the facts of the situation give me definite and tangible grounds for suspicion. Secondly, Austin and Wittgenstein's remarks go on to demonstrate that we usually have no difficulties resolving the practical uncertainty about pretense "im besonderen Fall" (BPP II 325; §621). And the reason for the lack of difficulty is that, though the 'inner' may be the locus of psychological states and processes, and though what I suspect when I suspect the other of pretense is a disparity in the relation between her 'inner' and 'outer,' no final cause, no ultimate basis for this discrepancy lies 'hidden' in her 'inner' and inaccessible to me (LSPP I §§974, 977-978). As Austin and Wittgenstein view it, the act of pretense that I discern does not have its explanation only 'inside' the other, but is rather located 'outside' of her: in her actions, expressions, and behaviors and the events, circumstances, details that surround them. One might put it this way: what I see—the pain that she manifests in the particular situation and surroundings in which she exhibits it, in addition to what she has done and goes on to do—is that which takes place. It is that which I must make sense of, if I want to make sense of anything. With this shift, one significant component of the conventional depth, or vertical, model of the relation between the 'inner' and the 'outer,' namely, the component that takes the 'inner' of the other to be the primary repository of the unfathomable meaning behind the 'outward' expressions of our psychological states, has been dislodged, to be replaced by an observation and evaluation of the surface, or horizontal plane.

But here, the recognition that Wittgenstein has deployed many of these same grammatical observations throughout his discussions of language, of how to mean and

understand something, as well as of the question of how to follow a rule correctly in the *Untersuchungen* raises a question.³⁵ For if these grammatical investigations allowed Wittgenstein to successfully—by which I mean that he felt himself able to stop writing obsessively about the issues—counter the interlocutor’s faulty picture of language; the interlocutor’s misguided insistence that thought, or representation, is the primary means by which we make sense of the world; and his unsound assumption that the ability to understand words and follow rules and conventions necessarily implies the possession of some knowledge, why does Wittgenstein feel that the grammatical observations do not carry the same force when brought against the skeptic’s qualms about pretense? That Wittgenstein does not take the grammatical remarks to be a sufficiently effective response to the uneasiness about pretense is even more surprising when one considers that he views questions about language, meaning, and understanding to be analogous to the issue of psychological states in the following regard: “Die Idee vom Geist des Menschen, den man sieht oder nicht sieht, ist sehr ähnlich der der Wortbedeutung, die als ein Vorgang oder Objekt beim Wort steht” (LPSS I 979). I take Wittgenstein’s point to be

³⁵ For grammatical remarks regarding the difference between how the depth and surface models approach an analysis of language, see especially PU §§89-133. Recall, in particular, Wittgenstein’s understanding of the task of philosophy at PU §126: “Die Philosophie stellt eben alles bloß hin, und erklärt und folgert nichts. – Da alles offen daliegt, ist auch nichts zu erklären. Denn, was etwa verborgen ist, interessiert uns nicht.” The passages from Part One of the *Untersuchungen*, in which Wittgenstein points to the importance of the circumstances of an action or event for the determination of the applicability of a concept or of meaning are too many to list here. The following two paragraphs constitute, however, a good example of the kind of grammatical remarks I have in mind: “Wie ein Schachzug nicht allein darin besteht, das ein Stein so und so auf dem Brett verschoben wird, – aber auch nicht in den Gedanken und Gefühlen des Ziehenden, die den Zug begleiten; sondern in den Umständen, die wir nennen: »eine Schachpartie spielen«, »ein Schachproblem lösen«, und dergl.” (PU §33). And, at PU §35: “Es gibt freilich, was man »charakteristische Erlebnisse«, für das Zeigen auf die Form etwa, nennen kann. Zum Beispiel, das Nachfahren der Kontur mit dem Finger, oder mit dem Blick, beim Zeigen – Aber so wenig, wie *dies* in allen Fällen geschieht, in denen ich »die Form meine«, so wenig geschieht irgend ein anderer charakteristischer Vorgang in all diesen Fällen. – Aber auch, wenn ein solcher sich in allen wiederholte, so käme es doch auf die Umstände an – d.h. auf daß, was vor und nach dem Zeigen geschieht – ob wir sagen würden »Er hat auf die Form und nicht auf die Farbe gezeigt«.”

that the grammatical interventions that he has brought against pretense should have worked.

But if Austin and Wittgenstein's grammatical remarks about pretense do not succeed in entirely quieting the skeptical doubt concerning pretense, still the problem does not lie with the responses themselves. The grammatical interventions are not themselves wrong. If anything, the interventions have been given in answer to what looks like a single problem—the problem of silencing what presents as a philosophical uncertainty that “alles Benehmen könnte, theoretisch, eine Verstellung sein,” (LSPP I 257)—but which in fact reveals itself to be two distinct ones. To see this, recall that at BPP II §558 Wittgenstein contrasts the philosophical doubt associated with pretense not only with a notion of practical doubt, but also with the concept of a primitive one. I want to suggest that what Wittgenstein means by the concept of a primitive doubt, which he also refers to as “die prinzipielle Unsicherheit” (BPP II §563) and a “psychologische Tatsache” (BPP §137; see also BPP §151 and BPP II §612), is its fundamental relation, or internal link, to outward expression (LSPP II 123d). That is, what is at stake in those situations in which I may be said to experience a primitive kind of uncertainty about the other, and to suspect her of pretense, are those in which the other employs language—both verbal and non-verbal—to express, and thereby attribute to herself, particular psychological states and processes.³⁶

The reason for this constitutively primitive doubt about psychological, or expressive, uses of language lies in the fact that the agreement in judgments which characterizes the way we relate to concepts which Wittgenstein has analyzed in the first

³⁶ For an analysis of why first-person psychological avowals must be considered self-ascriptions that have a truth-value, see David Finkelstein, *Expression and the Inner* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 2003), especially Chapters Four and Five.

third of the *Untersuchungen*, concepts such as color, length, and mathematical series and equations, does not exist for the question of whether or not “eine Gefühlsäußerung echt, oder unecht ist” (PU 1084-1085; PU II 574-575, LSPP §§951, 953). And in the absence of agreement in judgments, there cannot be anything that would count either as “einen Denk-, oder Beobachtungsfehler” or as proof (“beweisen”) (PU 1084; PU II 574). But Wittgenstein takes care to point out that although “[d]ie Beurteilung der Fälle schwankend ist,” and although “die zureichende Evidenz ist von der unzureichenden durch keine klare Grenze geschieden,” the concept of evidence still applies (BPP II §614, LSPP §§951-953). Wittgenstein observes: “Man kann wohl durch Evidenz davon überzeugen, daß Einer sich in dem und dem Seelenzustand befinde, daß er z.B. sich nicht verstelle. Aber es gibt hier auch ‘unwägbare’ Evidenz” (PU 1085; PU II 575). The point, for Wittgenstein, is that although rules exist for the governing of how to judge the truthfulness of first-person psychological avowals and ascriptions, these rules do not amount to a system, which means that they cannot be taught in school, but only mastered through experience (PU 1084-1085; PU II 574-575).

What drives the above account about the primitive doubt inherent to first-person utterances forward is balance, with my *certainty* about the other in any one case matched by another observer’s *uncertainty* about her (PU 1084; PU II 574). Compared to the selection of passages at which we looked in Section 3.2, the perspective from which expressions of feelings and pretense are considered here has been further narrowed, from a case-by-case basis to the individual case. And from that limited vantage point, what Wittgenstein elsewhere terms “die verschwommene Grenze des Begriffs [der Verstellung]” cannot have any effect (LSPP §255). The sense of equilibrium is reflected,

moreover, in the writing itself. The tone is assured. The observations, versions of which can be found scattered and repeated throughout the notebooks on psychology, but which in MS 144, or what has been published as Section XI of Part Two of the *Untersuchungen*, have been strung together such that they reveal a carefully developed and sustained ‘argument.’³⁷ One gets the sense that the pieces of the puzzle have been fitted together, and that Wittgenstein could choose to stop writing.

And indeed, Section XI does come to a preliminary kind of end. Wittgenstein writes:

Verstellung ist natürlich nur ein besonderer Fall davon, daß einer, z.B., eine Schmerzäußerung von sich gibt und nicht Schmerzen hat. Wenn dies überhaupt möglich ist, warum sollte denn dabei immer Verstellung statthaben, – dieses sehr spezielle Muster auf dem Band des Lebens? (see also BPP §137 and BPP II §612)

. . .

Ja es könnte ein Fall eintreten, in welchem wir sagen würden: »Er *glaubt*, sich zu verstellen.« (PU 1086; PU II 577)

Why only a preliminary end? It is such, firstly, because the final pages of Section XI pose the question of what the problem of pretense might have to do with the discussion of aspect seeing. Why, one wants to ask, does the focused discussion of aspect perception in the previous pages begin to drift into a discussion of meaning and aesthetics before culminating in a series of observations about pretense? Secondly, the ending is preliminary because the above passages send the reader from the balanced argument about evidence back to the beginning of the writings of the philosophy of psychology,

³⁷ Joachim Schulte notes in the introduction to the historical-critical edition of the *Untersuchungen* that while the selection of passages that have been published as Part Two of that text have been drawn from throughout the notebooks on the philosophy of psychology, Wittgenstein has rearranged the sequence of the paragraphs. See Joachim Schulte, “Einleitung,” Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophische Untersuchungen: Kritisch-genetische Edition*, ed. Joachim Schulte (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 2001) 27-30.

with its unrelenting project of finding a way to delimit the threat of pretense and an acceptable response to the misgivings about other minds. Finally, I want to suggest that the ending is preliminary because, though the above passages may be seen to constitute Wittgenstein's 'final refutation' of the skeptical worry about pretense, they are also the starting point of lines of reasoning that depend for their success upon the force of *cultural* example. For indeed, it is extremely difficult to understand Wittgenstein's suggestion that there exist cases of non-identity between 'outward' expression and an 'inner' psychological state that do not count as cases of pretense, if one considers it from within the givens of post-Enlightenment thought and culture. For within this space, not only are there no such cases of pretense that aren't pretense, but one cannot even imagine them. What would they look like? Wittgenstein doesn't seem to be engaging with the skeptic so much as asking us to abandon our concept of pretense entirely, to change what we call ("nennen") pretense, to change our "Einstellung" to it (LSPP §§224-225), to change how we see and stand toward it (PU 1042; PU II 205). The question then becomes whether such a thing is possible: can we change the use we have for pretense, and our interest in it (PU §§569, 570)? But before we can begin to answer this question, it will be necessary to find out what it is that Wittgenstein asks us to see differently about pretense. Through a close reading of two of the final three passages of Section XI, I want in the next section to propose an answer to this last question. I will then consider the related one about what would be needed for us to do as he asks, and whether or not his writing might meet some of these needs.

4 The Final Refutation of Pretense

This section begins with an attempt to answer the first of the above two questions through a close reading of two of the final three passages of Section XI, beginning with the claim that “Verstellung ist natürlich nur ein besonderer Fall davon, daß einer, z.B., eine Schmerzäußerung von sich gibt und nicht Schmerzen hat.” The phrase “nur ein besonderer Fall” calls to mind the earlier passages at which we looked in Section 3.2, passages in which Wittgenstein spoke about pretense as a series of discrete, practical problems to be managed via a surface reading of the circumstances in which the act of simulation is suspected to have been carried out. In those passages, the aim of the text was to reassure the skeptic by distinguishing between isolated cases of pretense and the many more instances of first-person utterances in which pretense could have, but did not empirically arise because there was no opportunity, motive, etc. In the sentence quoted above, Wittgenstein is no longer content to address the issue of pretense as a matter of individual cases of potential deception. Against the skeptic’s inclination to immediately suspect pretense when he meets with any mismatch between the outward expression of a psychological state and the absence of that state, Wittgenstein’s “davon” asserts that there are other kinds of mismatches (“aber das sind nicht alle,” cf. PU §§3 and 20). The catch, however, is that in moving to so assert, Wittgenstein is effectively denying the Enlightenment assumption that the primary purpose of the ‘outer’ is to give expression to the ‘inner’ self, as opposed to giving expression to something located altogether outside of the individual.³⁸ This raises a pair of questions that will need answering: namely, can we and the skeptic possibly make sense of a pre-Enlightenment conception of the relation

³⁸ Ursula Geitner, *Die Sprache der Verstellung: Studien zum rhetorischen und anthropologischen Wissen im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1992) 170.

between the ‘outer’ and the ‘inner’? Or, alternately, can Wittgenstein provide us with convincing examples in which outward expression is used to give expression to something outside of the individual? For the moment, it’s enough to observe that in the event of success, the gain would indeed be great. For the skeptic would no longer be free to worry that all first-person avowals of psychological states and processes represent potential instances of pretense. She would be forced to recognize that, of the many possible kinds of discrepancies, of the many different circumstances in which first-person psychological avowals do not accord with a person’s ‘inner’ state, nothing in fact demands that “[it should] always be pretending that is taking place” ([w]arum sollte denn dabei immer Verstellung statthaben . . . ?) (PU 1086; PU II 577).

I have been arguing that the quote at which we have just looked seeks to establish that pretense is, structurally speaking, neither the only nor the most likely explanation for a mismatch between an expressive ‘outer’ and the ‘inner.’ It should not come as a surprise, then, that the final observation of Section XI works to complicate and open up the definition of pretense itself. Recall that Wittgenstein suggests: “Ja es könnte ein Fall eintreten, in welchem wir sagen würden: »Er *glaubt*, sich zu verstellen«” (PU 1086; PU II 577). We might begin our analysis of this passage by noting its similarity to several other passages from throughout the writings on the philosophy of psychology, and by noting its extreme brevity in contrast to those other more elaborate ones.³⁹ We might wonder,

³⁹ See, for instance, the following passages:

“Die Unsicherheit, die immer besteht, ist nicht die, ob er nicht vielleicht heuchelt (denn er könnte sich ja sogar einbilden, zu heucheln), sondern der komplizierte Zusammenhang des Wortes ‘Schmerz haben’ mit dem menschlichen Benehmen” (LSPP II 45b).

“Im Inneren da ist entweder Schmerzen oder Verstellung. Außen sind Zeichen (das Benehmen), die nicht mit völliger Sicherheit das eine oder andre bedeuten.

Aber so ist es nicht. Die äußern Zeichen bedeuten in äußerst komplizierter Weise, manchmal unzweideutig, manchmal unsicher: Schmerz, Verstellung und manches andre” (LSPP II 82).

further, why Wittgenstein chose to include this minimal iteration of the thought in Section XI, before realizing that, with this passage, Wittgenstein has not told us anything about pretense itself. He has only provided an example, a case that, we must assume, has some force. But to understand what Wittgenstein intends for the example to demonstrate, we will need to fill in the details of the case by imagining a set of circumstances. We might imagine, for instance, that a man's girlfriend is breaking up with him. He does not find that he is very sad about it. Nonetheless, during the breakup, he pretends to be in pain in order not to hurt her feelings. But observing him, we might conclude that the man only believes he is pretending. That is, we might believe that he really is in pain. Once context has been provided, it quickly becomes clear that, for Wittgenstein, the force of the passage turns on just how complex it is, and how complex pretense is. For what the example makes clear is that there are different kinds of pretense. The point seems to be that not all pretense can be understood in a straightforward and easy opposition to authentic behavior; not all feigned pain can be understood in strict opposition to real pain. The example demonstrates that it is not necessarily possible to agree upon and determine beforehand, apart from the circumstances, apart from other behaviors, what the status of a particular behavior is. Indeed, I take Wittgenstein's point to be that it is here neither possible nor useful to hold on to the definition of pretense as the straightforward and stable opposite of sincerity. As Wittgenstein notes at LSPP II 45b, the real uncertainty in such situations has to do with the much more complicated question of how to apply the notion of being in pain to the myriad human behaviors that the other might exhibit or take

“Aber natürlich ist es auch unsicher, ob er sich nicht nur so stellt, als verstelle er sich. Nur ist diese Verstellung seltener und hat nicht so leicht verständliche Gründe” (BPP §137).

“‘Er wird nicht kommen, aber ich werde mich ganz so stellen, als glaubte ich, er werde kommen.’ Das könnte ich Einem sagen, aber in Wirklichkeit zu dieser Verstellung pathologisch gezwungen sein, so daß sie nicht eigentlich Verstellung wäre (LSPP §144; see also BPP II §613, LSPP §§224-225, 252, 863, 967).

herself to exhibit. Where the Enlightenment depth model of pretense holds as fundamental the idea that the structure of pretense is a binary one, and that one can, from any and all observer positions, always check behavior against the ‘inner’ in order to determine the truthfulness of the other’s expressions. By contrast, Wittgenstein re-introduces the notions of intention, perspective, indeed of aspect seeing—I will return to the question of the link between aspect-seeing and pretense below—into our assessments about deception. In doing so, he returns to a more complicated, seventeenth-century model of deception, one that assumes that the observer is being observed, that observer positions change, that intention is both visible and invisible. Indeed, such passages bring to mind the prudence teachings of someone such as Baltasar Gracián.⁴⁰ I have been arguing that Wittgenstein’s final refutation of the skeptical doubt about pretense points repeatedly to an understanding of pretense that more readily accords with seventeenth century’s understanding of deception than with the Enlightenment’s conception of it. In the next section, it will be necessary to ask whether Wittgenstein’s in some senses ‘Baroque’ grammatical remarks about pretense can be comprehended by her to whom they are directed: namely, to the post-Enlightenment skeptic of other minds, a skeptic most likely unfamiliar with the expectations, assumptions, givens, and models of perception that characterize early modern thought and culture. Much will therefore depend upon the force and evidentiary force of Wittgenstein’s examples.

5 Wittgenstein’s Examples

In the above analysis of the last lines of Section XI of Part Two of the *Untersuchungen*, we saw that it is the force of the example that accomplishes the work of redefining and

⁴⁰ Geitner, *Die Sprache der Verstellung*, 11-15.

broadening the definition of pretense. This method of proceeding by way of examples becomes particularly interesting as we return now to the issue of the examples with which Wittgenstein might answer his own implied question about what, other than pretense, a mismatch between the other's 'outward' expression and her 'inner' psychological state could count as. Admittedly, the very few examples that Wittgenstein offers are likely to leave the skeptic in no better position to comprehend the more complicated, non-binary pre-Enlightenment conception of the relation between the 'outer' and the 'inner' nor to see the validity of it within the cultural context of her own post-Enlightenment circumstances. Wittgenstein suggests namely that instead of pretense, such a mismatch of the 'inner' and 'outer' might result in one of the following situations:

Ein bestimmtes Gift könnte [die Person] in einen Zustand versetzen, in welchem er als 'Automat' handelt, sich nicht verstellt, aber nichts fühlt, obgleich er Gefühle äußert. (BPP §137)

Kann er nicht träumen? Kann sich die Sache nicht anders verwirren? (*Couvade*.)
Denk daran, wie oft es unmöglich ist, zu sagen: Einer sei ehrlich, oder unehrlich; aufrichtig, oder unaufrichtig. (Ein Politiker z.B. Wohlmeinend, oder das Gegenteil. Wieviel dumme Fragen werden darüber gestellt! Wie oft passen die Begriffe nicht! (BPP II §713)

I want to suggest that the work of the examples might be replaced by Wittgenstein's discussion of aspect and aspect seeing. Presumably the skeptic, if she is not aspect-blind, can much more readily perceive and accept the kinds of perceptual shifts that characterize *Vexierbilder* such as the duck-rabbit (PU II 520). For what Wittgenstein's discussion of aspect emphasizes is that how we perceive and relate not only to picture objects, but indeed objects of all kinds, can shift, depending on the circumstances and contexts in which we see them. This means that Wittgenstein's teaching of aspect and aspect shifts can prepare the skeptic to accept the conceptual shift that is required to recognize that not

all mismatches between the other's outward expression and her avowal are necessarily pretense. Indeed, it is precisely to prepare his readers and the skeptic for an acceptance of this conceptual shift that the final refutation of pretense will demand of them that Wittgenstein collects both topics in MS 144 and Section XI. Of course, the discussion of aspect can get the skeptic only so far. Wittgenstein's refutation can acquire the full force of a refutation only when juxtaposed with an analysis of early modernity, and of the changes that the concept of 'Verstellung' as well as an analysis of how the notions of the 'inner' and 'outer' are subsequently realigned as part of the Enlightenment's attempt to mark its discontinuity with the earlier period.

Chapter Two: Pretense in Lohenstein's Agrippina and Sophonisbe

1 Wittgenstein and Pretense: An Early Modern Detour

Against the skeptical worry that because others *sometimes* render themselves 'opaque' by blocking expression or by pretending, it is perhaps *always* the case that they are only pretending to, for example, be in pain, we have seen that Wittgenstein simply and repeatedly asserts that "Verstellung ist natürlich nur ein besonderer Fall davon, daß Einer, z.B. eine Schmerzäußerung von sich gibt und nicht Schmerzen hat."¹ How is this any kind of an argument against the skeptic? How, indeed, are we even to understand the rejoinder, since it seems to imply that there are instances of someone's producing expressions of an affect [s]he doesn't have that *aren't* instances of pretense? What would these instances of pretense, which aren't pretense, look like? Wittgenstein seems to be asking us to give up our concept of pretense altogether.

Indeed, it is extremely difficult to understand Wittgenstein's suggestion if one views it from a post-Enlightenment framework in which the 'inner' is conceived of as primary, and the 'outer' to be expressive of the 'inner' (as opposed to something outside of me altogether), and where 'inner' is furthermore defined as my inner nature (as opposed to a nature that has been *affected* in the manner in which the actor or the rhetor first affects for herself the nature that she will subsequently project to others). That is, the Enlightenment held as fundamental the principle of the identity between my 'inner,' so

¹ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophische Untersuchungen: Kritisch-genetische Edition*, ed. Joachim Schulte (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 2001) 1086; that is PU II, 576. Further citations from this text will be included in the main text. Quotations from Part One of the *Untersuchungen* are taken from the *Spätfassung* (TS 227) and will be cited as PU I followed by the paragraph number. For quotations from what has been published as Part Two of that text, I will provide the page number where they can be found within the critical-historical edition. I will then cite them as PU II, followed by the page number where they may be found in Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Werkausgabe* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1995) vol. 1. Note that Section XI of Part Two, or MS 144, of the critical-historical edition follows Wittgenstein in numbering the aphorisms a1, a2, a3, and so on. Where relevant, I will also include these paragraph numbers after the relevant page number.

conceived, and my ‘outer,’ “an identity which permitted that which is thought and felt to be seen and heard.”² And if this identity of the ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ was popularized in the Enlightenment as sincerity, that to which this identity, this sincerity, stands necessarily opposed is the concept of pretense. Put differently: after the Enlightenment, it would appear that all mismatches between the ‘outer’ and the ‘inner’ must necessarily be understood not just mismatches, but as the absence of authenticity: as simulated.³ I propose that we can perhaps begin to see the force of Wittgenstein’s refutation of pretense as the grounds for skepticism of other minds if we put two seemingly remote bodies of texts in constellation with one another. My claim is that an analysis of how seventeenth-century texts conceive of the relation of the ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ with regard to pretense helps to shed light onto Wittgenstein’s treatment of this issue. Let me say, though, that I don’t mean at all to imply any material impact or continuity between these two sets of texts, but rather to suggest that it is possible and productive to trace out an affinity between them, an affinity that results, as I hope will become apparent, from a common interest in how to relate external behavior to the ‘inner.’

2 A Typology of Pretense: Lohenstein’s *Agrippina*

In order to get a better handle on what Wittgenstein could possibly mean with the claim that not all instances of incongruity between ‘outward’ behavior and ‘inner’ affect are instances of pretense, I would like in this section to advance a typology of the different forms of pretense in Daniel Casper von Lohenstein’s Roman mourning play *Agrippina*, which stages the story of the Roman emperor Nero’s interaction with and ultimate

² Ursula Geitner, *Die Sprache der Verstellung: Studien zum rhetorischen und anthropologischen Wissen im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1992) 170.

³ See Geitner, *Die Sprache der Verstellung*, Chapters IV and V, especially 154-170.

murder of the title figure, his mother.⁴ The play is well suited as a case study because the text not only depicts particular instances of deception, but also implicitly presents a theory of (dis)simulation.⁵ Succinctly put, the principle underlying the progression of the scenes that I shall be discussing can be described as a gradual removal or withdrawal of a concealed or otherwise hidden affect—a withdrawal that by the time we get to the third chorus-like interlude, or *Reyen*, will have been taken to such extremes, that the very notion of concealment itself becomes problematic.

2.1 Agrippina and Nero: The “Feind” / “Freund”-Matrix Governing a Mother and Son Relationship

I’d like to start by looking at the most conventional—although by no means the most boring—case of (dis)simulation in Lohenstein’s mourning play: namely, the series of intrigues with which Agrippina and Nero attempt to outwit one another politically and personally. Recall that the former empress and the current emperor, a mother and son who in fact despise each other, pretend throughout the play to have great affection for one another. The unfiltered expression of an ‘inner’ affect—in their case, hate—is suppressed at the same time that both characters simulate an observable behavior—everything from tender loving care to burning sexual desire—for which no affect exists. Both the main protagonists and the secondary characters with whom they interact openly reflect upon

⁴ The play was first published together with Lohenstein’s *Epicharis* in 1665 in Breslau. In what follows, I will quote from the historical-critical edition: Daniel Casper von Lohenstein, *Sämtliche Werke: Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, ed. Lothar Mundt, Wolfgang Neuber and Thomas Rahn (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2004) section II, vol. 2.1. Small Roman numerals indicate the act and Arabic numerals the verse number.

⁵ While most secondary sources acknowledge the significance of (dis)simulation for the play, many still view (dis)simulation as a kind of breakdown in the system of communication. I argue instead for the constitutive function of (dis)simulation for communication. For a similar approach, see Friedrich A. Kittler, “Rhetorik der Macht und Macht der Rhetorik,” *Johann Christian Günther (mit einem Beitrag zu Lohensteins ‘Agrippina’)*, ed. Hans-Georg Pott (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1988) 39-52: “Simulation und Dissimulation, Fehlanwendung und Mißbrauch hindern Sprechakte nicht am Gelingen” (41).

the incongruence between the pair's affects and their behavior. As an example of this open discourse, consider the following rapid-fire exchange between Nero and his faithful servant Paris, an exchange in which enjambment and the coupling of antithetical concepts to the rhyme scheme is employed to make a point about the paradoxical, but apparently inescapable interconnectedness of the concepts "Feind" and "Freund" as well as "Schein" and "Sein":

NERO:	Was für Feind
	Dreut unser Zeder Fall?
PARIS:	Ich zittere den Freund
	Zu nennen.
NERO:	Wen? Den Freund?
PARIS:	Der es am meisten <i>schiene</i>
	Zu <i>sein</i> .
NERO:	Eröffn' es bald. Wer ist es?
PARIS:	Agrippine.
	(i, 161-65; emphasis mine, A.N.)

Note, also, that by rhyming "schiene" with "Agrippine," Paris' second couplet associates her with the mode of "Schein." But this dazzling technical description of their relationship only serves to confirm that the constellation Agrippina-Nero remains, after all, perfectly true to the understanding of pretense as falsehood, or the binary opposite of truth, that will come to dominate eighteenth-century thought and life.⁶

⁶ Even though pretense in this instance remains linked to falsehood, the specific ways in which the characters deceive one another complicates the status of pretense. For rather than presenting an affect that they don't actually have, these characters 'deflect' actual affects. See the stimulating reading by Thomas Rahn, "Anmerkungen zur Physiologie der Liebesblicke in Lohensteins *Agrippina*," *Simpliciana: Schriften der Grimmelshausen-Gesellschaft* XIV (1992): 163-175: "In Lohensteins *Agrippina* gelingt den Protagonisten eine willkürliche Handhabung des normalerweise unfreiwilligen 'geilen Blicks' . . . Dabei geht die Begierdenübertragung durch den 'geilen Blick' über die theatralische Verfügbarmachung der *simulatio* in der höfischen Klugheitslehre hinaus . . . Die *simulatio* beruht auf Verstellung, das heißt auf der schauspielerischen Einübung in die sichtbaren Wirkungen von Affekten . . . Das Liebäugeln Sabine Poppaeas, Agrippinas und Neros dagegen instrumentalisiert die tatsächlich vorhandene Affektdisposition der Geilheit . . . Sie spielen Geilheit nicht vor, sie kontrollieren lediglich deren Wirkungen" (173). Cf. also Thomas Rahn, "Affektpathologische und therapeutische Handlungszitate in Lohensteins *Agrippina*," *Heilkunde und Krankheitserfahrung in der frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Udo Benzenhöfer and Wilhelm Kühlmann (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1992) 201-227, in particular 208: "Die vorgetäuschte 'brennende' Liebe für Nero stelle nur eine Verschalung der ebenfalls 'brennenden' Rache (als Ausdruck der Ehrsucht) dar: . . . Die

2.2 Sabine Poppaea and Otho: The Problematic Link Between Surface Behavior and Hidden Intentions and Motives

Things quickly become more complicated, though, when pretense is examined with respect to the character pair of the beautiful Sabine Poppaea and her nobleman husband Otho,⁷ who when the play opens responds to Nero's self-satisfaction with his position, power, and wealth by affirming that success before then asserting that he nonetheless finds himself to be better off:

Der Zucker dieser Welt/ durch welchen wir genesen/
Ist Schönheit/ Liebes=Reitz. Es tauschte Mulciber/
Wie arm er ist/ umbs Reich nicht mit dem Jupiter.
Sein schwartzes Hauß/ da er kan bey der Venus liegen
Gibt mehr/ als Jupitern die Sternenburg/ vergnügen.
Zu dem so steh' ich an; . . . (i, 72-77)

And in response to Nero's query, "Wo ziel't die Red' hinaus? . . . / . . . Und wer geh't der Wollust=Libgen Bahn / Vergnügter/ als der Fürst?," (i, 81-83) Otho replies: "Der den Poppee liebet/ Wenn die *Octavie* [that is, Nero's wife and stepsister; A.N.], mein Fürst/ nur Eckel giebet: . . . Zwar/ daß *Octavie* des Käysers Tochter sey / Ist etwas/ aber nichts/ das Lieb' und Brunst vergnüget . . ." (i, 83-91). Nero's initial question to Otho gains its significance not in the immediate context of their exchange, but rather in the larger one of the play, and of our typology. Precisely because Otho never comments upon any of his political and personal motivations and intentions, either alone or in the presence of a trusted confidant, it is impossible for any of the other players at court, but also for the audience, to have any knowledge of his 'inner' mental and emotional state—a knowledge

Täuschungskraft der simulierten Liebe beruhe demnach u.a. auf der Ähnlichkeit der Affekte Liebe und Rache/Ehrsucht in Bezug auf ihre physiologische Erklärung: beide Affekte 'brennen' im Herzen."

⁷ For further details about the historical Sabine Poppaea and Otho as well as their relationship, see the commentary in Daniel Casper von Lohenstein, *Sämtliche Werke: Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, ed. Lothar Mundt, Wolfgang Neuber and Thomas Rahn (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2004) section II, vol. 2.2, 640-41.

that in the case of Nero and Agrippina was made widely and pointedly available to everyone at court. In the absence of insight, the actions, behaviors, and words of both Otho and Sabine Poppaea become a kind of projection screen that solicits both inferences of motivation and ascriptions of intention, ascriptions that—whether they turn out to be right or wrong—always presuppose a depth behind or beneath the observable exterior or surface. A good example of the kind of speculative ascription that I have in mind can be found in the second scene of the second act. Unsatisfied by and unhappy with his wife Octavia, whom he married at Agrippina’s behest and as a result of her intrigue, Nero is disappointed that his rendezvous with Sabine Poppaea has failed to develop as wished. In response, Paris devises a plan for his master not only to win Sabine, but also to be rid of her husband at the same time. The plan operates on ascriptions with regard both to Sabine Poppaea’s behavior: “Sie stell’t sich kalt / wohl wissend: Daß”—to summarize the play’s ornate language—absence makes the heart grow fonder (ii, 189-193)⁸ as well as to Otho’s: “Ja/ was will Otho sonst/ wenn er so oft die Frau / lobt und nach Hofe schickt? als: Daß sie Nero schau’ / Und Liebes-Zunder fang?” (ii, 213-15) Despite the interpretative pathos exhibited by Paris—his conviction that things can only be this way and no other—the text itself remains consistently ambivalent about what Otho’s intentions with regard to his wife and political career are. Indeed, the audience might wonder whether Otho himself knows. But precisely because it is always assumed that a different and unspoken intention is hidden beneath or behind the surface behavior of this

⁸ With this observation, Paris accuses Sabine Poppaea of the same deception or pretense that he earlier attributed to Agrippina when he outs her as a “Feind” (i, 161-65; see the discussion of the passage above). Paris believes that Sabine is in actuality “warm,” but only pretends to be “kalt.” Note that ‘stellen’ is the verb form of ‘Stellung,’ the German word for ‘simulatio,’ or the pretense of having or being that which one is not. ‘Stellen’ and ‘Stellung’ are to be distinguished from ‘verstellen’ and ‘Verstellung,’ or ‘dissimulatio.’ See below, Section 3.1 and Geitner, *Die Sprache der Verstellung*, 24-27, 62-64, and *passim*.

courtly pair, interpretations are brought into play that cause the action to develop in a particular direction.

2.3 *The Reven of the Sea- and Mountain-Goddesses*

Leaving behind the question of how pretense plays out in the relationships between the protagonists on stage, I want to turn now to an examination of what the play might have to say about the problem of pretense on the structural level. But before I do, let me ask you to consider briefly the elaborate nexus of words having to do with the concepts of revelation—such as ‘eröffnen’ (i, 164), ‘an das Licht k[ommen]’ (i, 465), ‘entdecken’ (i, 466; ii, 339; iv, 138)—and concealment—‘(ver)bergen’ (i, 466; ii, 488), ‘verkappen’ (i, 591), ‘verdecken’ (ii, 228).⁹ These words can be found scattered throughout the text of Lohenstein’s *Agrippina*, and not just in those passages that deal directly with human pretense. They organize the play according to the functional opposition between notions of revealing and concealing that have strikingly little to do with the question of pretense, or the machinations of the central characters. In many instances, the terms are used in a surprisingly innocent, literal, and mundane way. The suggestion might be that the complicated issue of pretense is just one of several possible kinds of revelation and concealment.

⁹ Another example of the way in which notions of revelation and concealment as pretense are complicated and subverted is the metaphor of the “Unschulds-Schild.” By coupling “Unschuld,” or innocence, with “Schild,” or a protective shield, this paradoxical composite presents blamelessness as a kind of transparently impermeable protective barrier. One might say that the claim of the metaphor of the “Unschulds-schild” is that irreproachability fills the depths of the ‘inner,’ rendering it pure surface. It is no accident, though, that the metaphor is most often and brazenly invoked by Agrippina to defend herself against enemy assertions that she is simulating one affect or the other. For a discussion of similar “Zweigliedrige Stilfiguren,” see Albrecht Schöne, *Emblematik und Drama im Zeitalter des Barock*, 2nd ed. (München: Beck, 1968) 139-150.

With this possibility in mind, I would like to direct your attention to the structural composition of Lohenstein's text, specifically to a moment in which the text develops a *paradigmatic* model of (dis)simulation, i.e. its own theory regarding the concrete cases of (dis)simulation discussed above. It is not by chance that the scene that I have in mind—the *Reyen* that ends the third act—can be found almost exactly at the mathematical center of the play. For in addition to reflecting upon and allegorizing that which has already occurred on the level of the plot, this third *Reyen* is the only one of the five that also moves the action of the drama forward.¹⁰ Recall that on the level of the plot, this is the moment when Nero has convinced Agrippina to embark upon a pleasure cruise with a ship that has been designed to capsize at the touch of a button—an intrigue clearly designed to get rid of the odious mother without attracting suspicion to himself. But because it would have been difficult even for the theater of the seventeenth century to stage a full-fledged shipwreck, we are here dealing not with a Blumenbergian “Schiffbruch mit Zuschauer,” but in yet another twist of the medial dial, the audience becomes as it were ‘Zuhörer von Zuschauern des Schiffbruchs.’¹¹ For it is only as a result of the back and forth between the mountain- and sea-goddesses and not by means of direct perception that we learn about what befalls Agrippina at sea. The technique of *teichoskopia*, or *Mauerschau* in German, which Lohenstein employs quite often in his

¹⁰ For a discussion of the function of the *Reyen* in early modern plays, see Albrecht Schöne's *Emblematik und Drama*, 162-179. Schöne's argument is important insofar as it breaks with the long-prevailing view of the *Reyen* as a playful interlude that remains somewhat disconnected from the main action of the play. Instead, Schöne argues, the *Reyen* serves as a *subscriptio* to the *pictura* of the “Abhandlungen.” Such a reading allows us to stress the paradigmatic function of the third *Reyen* for the entirety of the play.

¹¹ For a slightly different approach to this scene, cf. Schöne, *Emblematik und Drama*, 186. Schöne also assumes that the staging of a shipwreck did not occur, but conjectures that a depiction of the shipwreck similar to the play's frontispiece, “vermutlich auf Leinwand gemalt und auf einen Holzrahmen gespannt,” was installed on the “Hinterbühne.” While this means that the shipwreck in Schöne's reading appears, as it were, on stage, it is still the linguistic exchange between the mountain- and sea-goddesses which transforms the static picture into action.

other plays but only once in this particular one, forces the problems of affective perception—namely the inability to see over or through an opaque surface and the subsequent need to rely upon that which is *reported*—upon the viewing, or as the case may be, the reading audience. And in doing so, the text does not merely disrupt the immediacy of the theatrical (re)presentation. It also splits that representation into multiple perspectives: for while the mountain-goddesses speculate that a “natürliche Ursache” is behind the cause of Agrippina’s accident—that is, that the sea is responsible for the shipwreck—the sea-goddesses are intent upon pleading their case and defending their reputation:

Schwärz’t/ Schwestern/ nicht die See mit frembden Flecken/
Wir sind so rein als Perl’ und Flutt.
Der trübe Schaum der Wellen sol verdecken
Was Kinder-Mord für Greuel thut. (iii, 477-480)

To this the mountain-goddesses answer:

Schweig’t! schweig’t! Das Meer stürz’t oft auch ohne schäumen.
Verborg’ne Falschheits=Klippen sind
Gefährlicher als Sturm und Wind.
Wer wolte sich von Kindern lassen träumen:
Daß sie solch Ding auf Mutter solten stifften? (iii, 487-491)

At stake in the above exchange—the language and naturalistic elements of which anticipate the “Widmungsgedicht,” or dedicatory poem, to *Sophonisbe*—is not merely a conflicting interpretation of that which has been seen to happen, but more fundamentally still, a divergent conception of the space of perception. Let us first address the question of the conflicting interpretations of that which has been seen: whereas the sea-goddesses correctly recognize the “trübe[n] Schaum der Wellen” for what it is—namely as a deftly exploited barrier to perception—the mountain-goddesses suspect that the “verborg’ne Falschheits=Klippen” beneath the surface of the sea are the cause of Agrippina’s accident.

For the sea-goddesses, absolutely nothing, in a literal and material sense, lies hidden beneath the sea's surface. As they read it, the events that take place on the water's surface do not have their cause in its depths, but are rather controlled by a mechanism or power that also lies on or above the waves. In short: that which takes place at or atop the sea's waves is that which occurs; there is no 'behind' or 'beneath;' the conventional vertical model of pretense is replaced by a horizontal reading of surfaces. Within the third *Reyen*, it is a crystallized sheet of ice that enables this kind of horizontal reading precisely by blocking the view into the depths and reflecting Nero's actions back to the observant reader of surfaces:

. . . Die See erschrick't und wird zu Eise/
 Daß solch Christall ein Spiegel sey/
 Der aller Welt den rechten Steinfelß weise/
 An dem diß Schiff sich stöß't entzwey.
 Die Laster sind die rechten Schifbruchs=Winde.
 Die Mutter wird ersäuf't vom eignen Kinde. (iii, 481-6)

By contrast, the mountain-goddesses continue to insist upon a model of perception in which the surface phenomenon of the shipwreck is generated from out of the depths, or a deep structure. Yet precisely this premise proves, as the text makes perfectly clear, to be misguided. The assumption that the cause of Agrippina's shipwreck lies hidden beneath the sea's surface distracts the mountain-goddesses from the relevant circumstances, circumstances that manifest themselves only in the horizontality of surfaces. Or, to put it another way: precisely because the mountain-goddesses rely upon the conventional, vertical conceptualization of pretense that will go on to dominate eighteenth-century literature, philosophy, and mores, they are unable to recognize the real deception.¹² It is

¹² The shift from a horizontal to a vertical model occurs as *eloquentia corporis* is reconfigured in early Enlightenment as *eloquentia cordis*. When the heart replaces the body as the prime site of 'authentic'

precisely because the mountain-goddesses rely upon the conventional depth model of pretense that Nero's elaborate stage production succeeds.¹³ At stake here is, of course, not simply the particular case of Agrippina's shipwreck. The image of the sea surface's vertical structuring of the realm of affective perception into surface behavior and the affect that lies beneath it partakes in a tradition that, I would argue, extends all the way to Winckelmann's famous description of Greek affects, and to Lessing's—albeit critical—quotation of it at the beginning of his *Laokoon*: “So wie die Tiefe des Meeres allezeit ruhig bleibt, die Oberfläche mag auch noch so wüten . . .”¹⁴ In Wittgenstein's own writings, it appears as an established trope—one deployed just as often to describe our language as our inner selves—that must be accurately recorded and debunked.¹⁵ The sea's surface as the structural element dividing those distinct and potentially divergent spaces seems to have disappeared. One must assume that it has become irrelevant, been forgotten or literalized, if indeed it was ever there to begin with. I want to suggest that the

expression, notions such as “Tiefe” and “Innerlichkeit” gain currency. See Geitner, *Die Sprache der Verstellung*, 171 sqq.

¹³ One could align the two models discussed above with the observations about the dramatic space in Lohenstein's *Agrippina* in Albrecht Koschorke, “Das Volk als Gerücht: Zur Labilität souveräner Herrschaft im Barockdrama,” *Die Kommunikation der Gerüchte*, ed. Jürgen Brokoff et al. (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2008) 68-78. Koschorke notes that while the “Topographie der Macht” (68) in the Baroque mourning play presents the sovereign at first glance as shielded from his surroundings by a multitude of protective layers, these layers turn out to be permeable, thus instituting a “Dynamik der Durchlässigkeit” (70). The sovereign needs to realize that he is not so much shielded from as connected to his surroundings by the palace's walls: in other words, he needs to recognize that his dramatic space is organized not according to a depth, but rather a surface model. Yet, as Christopher Wild demonstrates, Nero remains obsessed with depths: the autopsy of his mother allows him to penetrate her body's surface in an attempt to uncover the ‘hidden’ locus of his conception. See Christopher Wild, “Neros Kaiserschnitt: Das Phantasma der Selbstgeburt absoluter Macht in Lohensteins *Agrippina*,” *Kunst – Zeugung – Geburt: Theorien und Metaphern ästhetischer Produktion in der Neuzeit*, ed. Christian Begemann and David E. Wellbery (Freiburg i. Brsg.: Rombach, 2001) 111-149, in particular 123-24.

¹⁴ See Johann Joachim Winckelmann, “Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerey und der Bildhauer-Kunst,” *Kleine Schriften, Vorreden, Entwürfe*, ed. Walter Rehm (Berlin, New York: de Gruyter, 1968) 43 as well as Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, “Laokoon,” *Werke und Briefe in zwölf Bänden*, ed. Wilfried Barner et al. (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1985–2003) vol. 5/2, 17.

¹⁵ See for example PU I, 60, 89, 91, 92, 97, 111, 167, 209, 387, 594, 664; and PU II, 563-564, that is 1073-1075 in the historical-critical edition.

opposition between surface and depth so pervades Wittgenstein's philosophy that the sea surface has in effect been generalized into the analysis itself. Only rarely, and in displaced ways, does it turn up in aphorisms such as the following:

Die Musik scheint manchem eine primitive Kunst zu sein, mit ihren wenigen Tönen und Rhythmen. Aber einfach ist nur ihre Oberfläche, während der Körper, der die Deutung dieses manifesten Inhalts ermöglicht, die ganze unendliche Komplexität besitzt, die wir in dem Äußeren der anderen Künste angedeutet finden, und die die Musik verschweigt.

Die Religion ist sozusagen der tiefste ruhige Meeresgrund, der ruhig bleibt, wie hoch auch die Wellen oben gehen.—¹⁶

2.4 Wittgenstein with Lohenstein: A First Reckoning

As a first coda to the above typology of (dis)simulation, let me say a few words about reading Lohenstein together with Wittgenstein. It is, of course, not possible to map Lohenstein's *Agrippina* directly onto Wittgenstein's refutation of pretense—indeed to presume the possibility of a direct influence of the one on the other would raise serious methodological concerns. What interests me is rather the congruence of certain, if you will 'modern,'—though in no way to be taken as prefiguring—concerns that are observable in Lohenstein's drama and that are also present in Wittgenstein's late philosophy. When Wittgenstein claims that not all expressions of pain absent the pain-sensation are to be read as pretense, he does so because in these particular instances, it is not the relationship between the 'inner' and the 'outer' that is decisive, but rather the place of the behavior on the horizontal surface, within a larger context. Consider, for instance, the ritualized lamenting of professional mourners.¹⁷ *Nobody* is concerned with

¹⁶ Ludwig Wittgenstein, "Vermischte Bemerkungen," *Werkausgabe* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1989) vol. 8, 464 and 525.

¹⁷ For more on the practice of professional mourning, see Margaret Alexiou, *The Ritual Lament in Greek Tradition*, 2nd ed. (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002).

the ‘authenticity’ of the mourners’ feelings in this case. The legitimacy of the mourners’ crying turns on external behaviors and actions: on the fact that money has changed hands. And it is precisely this, if you will, anti-metaphysical move to do away with a preoccupation with that which lies ‘beneath’ or ‘behind’ in favor of an appreciation of the surface—that we find foreshadowed in the third *Reyen* of Lohenstein’s *Agrippina* and, as I hope to demonstrate in part three of this essay, in his *Sophonisbe*.¹⁸ More particularly, I’ll be suggesting that *Sophonisbe* uses clothing, costume, and most significantly the trope of cross-dressing to stage situations that call into question the very possibility of distinguishing between the perceptual surface and its would-be opposite: the ‘inner’ space ‘behind’ or ‘beneath’ that surface, where meaning and truth are often thought to lie.

3 Lohenstein’s *Sophonisbe*: *Cross-Dressing, Disguise, and Deception*

When a play meant primarily for the stage is accessible to its audience only on the written page,¹⁹ it’s perhaps not surprising that critics emphasize thematic concerns and questions

¹⁸ The play retells the story of Scipio and Rome’s defeat of the African Numidians and their queen Sophonisbe, despite the latter’s attempt to stave off the collapse of her realm and escape the ignominy of being paraded captive through Rome by abandoning her husband Syphax and seducing the traitorous general Masinissa into marrying her. Though it was first published in Breslau in 1680, the earliest known performance was given in May 1669 by schoolboys of the Magdalenen-Gymnasium in Breslau. There exists no copy of the performed play, but the “Szenar” from that production suggests the version of *Sophonisbe* performed in 1669 closely resembles the published text of 1680. See Lothar Mundt’s “Editionsbericht” to *Sophonisbe* in Daniel Casper von Lohenstein, *Sämtliche Werke: Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, ed. Lothar Mundt, Wolfgang Neuber, and Thomas Rahn (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2013) section ii, vol. 3.1, 828. For the ideological and geopolitical implications of the play, see Pierre Béhar, *Silesia tragica: Épanouissement et fin de l’école dramatique silésienne dans l’œuvre tragique de Daniel Casper von Lohenstein (1635-1683)* (Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1988) 159 sqq. In describing Lohenstein’s sympathy for Sophonisbe as a figure of resistance, Béhar, paraphrasing Flaubert, suggests that Lohenstein could have proclaimed: “Sophonisbe, c’est moi.” See Pierre Béhar, “Lohenstein oder der verhinderte Dichter: Zur Deutung des Trauerspiels *Sophonisbe*,” *Wolfenbütteler Barock-Nachrichten* 37 (2010) 1/2: 5-13, here: 11 and 13.

¹⁹ Here it is important to remember that while Lohenstein’s *Sophonisbe*, along with *Agrippina* and his other mourning plays, were performed in private houses and/or as school plays by Protestant schoolboys in Breslau, Lohenstein’s copiously erudite “Anmerckungen,” or notes, supplemented the published text of the play. This addition of the “Anmerckungen” suggests that the plays were also intended to be read. The “Anmerckungen” have received much scholarly attention. In the “Introduction” to her monograph *The*

of narrative structure over details about costume and dress. Consider, for example, the following scene from Act One of *Sophonisbe*, in which the title character exchanges clothes with her stepson Vermina after telling him the following:

. . . schmücke dich mit unserm Frauen=Kleide/
 Die Andacht macht: daß sich ein Held mit unser Seide
 Hier nicht verstellt und fleckt. Zeuch meinen Rock auch an;
 Daß ich in Helden=Tracht dem Mohnden opfern kan/
 Und du dis heil'ge Bild in Weiber=Kleidern ehren;
 Weil sonst die Göttin nicht pflegt Betende zu hören. (i, 375-380)²⁰

The philologist Gerhard Spellerberg directs attention to this very scene—which within the fictional world of the play coincides with the performance of a religious sacrifice—in the notes to his 1970 study of Lohenstein's works, entitled *Verhängnis und Geschichte*.²¹ Along with Dido's prophecies about Rome's defeat of Sophonisbe and Africa and the future ascendancy of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation under Leopold, the scene belongs, he notes, to “eine Reihe von Handlungszüge und Motiven” which have no basis in Lohenstein's historical sources.²² Nor, it turns out, can they be correlated to any

Intervention of Philology: Gender, Learning, and Power in Lohenstein's Roman Plays (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 2000), Jane O. Newman explores the complex relationship between Lohenstein's plays and his notes to them, focusing on the way in which the latter, by the very act of recording and clarifying the origins of the drama's sources, work to “mobil[ize]” (8), multiply, and problematize the play's apparent meanings. For more on the status of scholarly notes and their relation to the seventeenth-century German mourning play, as well as a discussion of Gryphius's and Lohenstein's “Anmerkungen,” see Andréas Pfersmann, *Séditions infrapaginales: poétique historique de l'annotation littéraire (XVIIe-XXIe siècles)* (Genf: Droz, 2011) 96-104. Compare also Dirk Niefanger's emphasis on the relation between the notes and the print format of the play: “Der Rahmen des schriftlichen Dramas endet mit den Anmerkungen . . . Die in Versalien mittig gesetzte Angabe “FINIS” zeigt dem Leser und nur diesem, dass erst jetzt und tatsächlich erst jetzt das Drama als literarisches Werk beendet ist.” See Dirk Niefanger, “Lohensteins *Sophonisbe* als Metadrama,” *Wolfenbütteler Barock-Nachrichten* 37 (2010) 1/2: 33-46, here: 37. For more on the practice and place of drama and dramatic productions in the school, see Adalbert Wichert, *Literatur, Rhetorik, und Jurisprudenz im 17. Jahrhundert: Daniel Casper von Lohenstein und sein Werk* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1991) 43-55.

²⁰ I will quote the text following the historical-critical edition: Daniel Casper von Lohenstein, *Sämtliche Werke: Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, ed. Lothar Mundt, Wolfgang Neuber, and Thomas Rahn (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2013) section ii, vol. 3.1. Small Roman numerals indicate the act and Arabic numerals the verse number.

²¹ Gerhard Spellerberg, *Verhängnis und Geschichte: Untersuchungen zu den Trauerspielen und dem „Arminius“-Roman Daniel Caspers von Lohenstein* (Bad Homburg v. d. H.: Gehlen, 1970) 236.

²² Here is the complete list of scenes mentioned by Spellerberg, *Verhängnis und Geschichte*, 236:

of the previous dramatic representations of the Sophonisbe story. Spellerberg rightly points out that the presence of these fictional scenes is highly unusual for the genre of the German mourning play in general and for Lohenstein in particular, but observes that they function to move the otherwise historically documented material of the plot “von einem Extrem ins andere.” He reasons that these kinds of fictional scenes, which are also to be found in *Epicharis* (1665), have their source in the tradition of the heroic-gallant novel, and that their novelistic origin remains unattributed because it conflicts directly with the mourning play’s concept of history.²³ What Spellerberg neglects to mention is that half of these fictional scenes involve Sophonisbe or a member of the royal family putting on someone else’s clothes.²⁴ Indeed, reading through *Sophonisbe*, one can’t but be struck by

“1. Sophonisbe entschließt sich nach der Gefangennahme ihres Gemahls, selber den Kampf gegen den Belagerer Masinissa zu führen, legt Männerkleidung an und macht sich bereit, den Göttern einen ihrer Söhne zu opfern.

2. Syphax kann sich durch Bestechung aus der Gefangenschaft befreien und taucht . . . im Tempel der belagerten Stadt auf.

3. Nachdem die Stadt durch Verrat den Feinden in die Hand gefallen ist, wird Syphax erneut gefangen genommen.

4. Sophonisbe, als römischer Soldat verkleidet, dringt in den Kerker ein, befreit Syphax, und läßt ihn in der römischen Tracht entfliehen, während sie selbst seine Kleider anlegt.

5. Masinissa will, um Sophonisbe besitzen zu können, Syphax töten und begibt sich heimlich in den Kerker. Daß er hier nicht Syphax, sondern Sophonisbe gegenübersteht, erkennt er erst in dem Augenblick, da diese seinem gezückten Doch ihre Brüste entgegenhält.

6. Sophonisbe ist bereit, drei gefangenen Männern ihres Volkes im Tempel das Herz auszuschneiden, erkennt unter diesen aber den inzwischen wieder gefangengenommenen Syphax und wird so mit beiden Ehemännern konfrontiert.”

²³ For more on the *disparity* between some of these fictional scenes of cross-dressing in *Sophonisbe* and the classical accounts of the Sophonisbe story, see the accounts cited by Lohenstein in his notes as well as Newman, *Intervention*, 52-54, and my footnote 98. For a general discussion of the significance of “history” for the genre of the mourning play, see Walter Benjamin’s seminal remarks on “Geschichte als Gehalt des Trauerspiels” in “Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels,” *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhäuser (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1991) vol. 1, 242-45.

²⁴ Spellerberg is of course not alone among critics, who have rarely done more than note in passing the prominence of attire in the play. One prominent recent exception is *The Intervention of Philology*, in which Jane O. Newman considers these passages from *Sophonisbe* precisely *because* they involve acts of cross-dressing. Newman observes that, in doing so, she is following Lohenstein’s lead. For, at least with regard to the scene of religious sacrifice from Act One, it is with the sartorial exchange between Sophonisbe and Vermina that Lohenstein concerns himself in his notes (48). I shall return to Newman’s reading of *Sophonisbe* later in the paper. See below p. 71 and footnote 100 of this chapter.

just how often clothing and getting dressed figure in the action of the play: at the behest first of his step-mother, then of his father Syphax, the Numidian prince Vermina²⁵ dresses himself once as a woman and once as their common enemy, the Romans. Sophonisbe herself thrice puts on men's clothing, and at one point in Act Two induces Syphax to clothe himself in the very Roman mercenary uniform that she has just taken off.

It's tempting to assume, as most critics have,²⁶ that these instances of the Numidian royal family dressing up in other people's clothing amount to instances of disguise and deception. Indeed, the famous and oft-quoted dedicatory preface²⁷ to the play seems to reinforce just such a reading when it emphasizes the plot as a paradigmatic example of the ways in which man plays at pretense. We are told:

Wer Lieb' und Ehrsucht wil aufs grimmste spielen sehn/
 Betrachte Masaniß' und Sophonisbens Thaten;
 Sie zeucht die Mutter aus das Glücksspiel zu verdrehn/
 Und wil ihr eigen Kind auf glimmen Rösten braten;
 Vermina wird ein Weib/ sie ein geharnschter Mann/
 Weil keines unvermummt sein Spiel vollenden kan.
 Die für dem Ehmann itzt aus Liebe sterben wil/
 ...
 Und/ der erst Buhler war/ als Hencker sie erdrückt.
 So spielet die Begierd' und Ehrgeitz in der Welt!²⁸

²⁵ The scene is complicated even further by the historical fact that, despite wearing "the enemy's attire," Vermina "becomes the exemplary future leader of colonial resistance" (Newman, *Intervention*, 49).

²⁶ See, for example, Spellerberg, *Verhängnis und Geschichte*, 236; Newman, *Intervention*, 49-50; Reinhart Meyer-Kalkus, *Wollust und Grausamkeit: Affektenlehre und Affektdarstellung am Beispiel von "Agrippina"* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986) 71, 153; and Schöne, *Emblematik und Drama*, 103-104.

²⁷ Wilfried Barner comments that, precisely because it takes as its theme the explication of the *homo ludens*, precisely because it sets forth an anthropological basis of theater, the dedicatory preface to *Sophonisbe* is one of the most cited texts of the German Baroque. What is significant for Barner, in the context of his essay on "Disponibile Festlichkeit," *Das Fest*, ed. Walter Haug and Rainer Warning (München: Fink, 1989) 247-275, here: 265, is that these citations and treatments of the opening poem almost always ignore the main text of the play itself. It should be noted that when Barner himself addresses *Sophonisbe* in *Barockrhetorik: Untersuchungen zu ihren geschichtlichen Grundlagen*, 2nd ed. (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2002), he is almost always referencing Lohenstein's dedication—see, for instance, 117 and 145.

²⁸ Daniel Casper von Lohenstein, "Widmungsgedicht," *Sämtliche Werke: Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, ed. Lothar Mundt, Wolfgang Neuber, and Thomas Rahn (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2013) section ii, vol. 3.1, 398 (verses 127-138). For an analysis of Lohenstein's understanding of the place of affect in the instances of "Kleider- und Rollentausch von Mann zu Frau, von Ehefrau zur Buhlerin, von Buhle zu Henker" see

But given the various moments of disguise and deception within the play, it is striking that the preface should so prominently draw our attention to the very first scene of cross-dressing and religious sacrifice, and that it should explicate this scene as one of “Vermummung.” For it is precisely during this episode that the play’s title character demonstrates how disguise and deception *fall short* of accounting for what’s happening on stage, even as she concedes the apparent logic of such an interpretation. I shall begin my analysis of Lohenstein’s *Sophonisbe* by looking at the alternative explanation offered by the title character of the religious ceremony she carries out with her stepson, commenting on the intricacies of its language and logic, before then going on to examine its implications for the play’s other scenes of sartorial exchange.

3.1 *Sophonisbe’s Objection, or an Exception to the Rule*

When Sophonisbe tells Vermina before swapping clothes with him in Act One that the religious sacrifice in which they are to participate means that their altered appearances cannot be considered instances of pretense, the word she uses is “Verstellung.”²⁹ The queen’s word choice is worth dwelling on. As critics such as Ursula Geitner and Reinhart Meyer-Kalkus have shown, the seventeenth century in general and Lohenstein in

Reinhart Meyer-Kalkus, *Wollust und Grausamkeit: Affektenlehre und Affektdarstellung am Beispiel von “Agrippina”* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986) 71.

²⁹ In the commentary of the historical-critical edition to *Sophonisbe*, Lothar Mundt conjectures that Sophonisbe uses ‘verstellt’ “hier wohl eher” in the sense of ‘verunstalten’ rather than of ‘verbergen.’ But he gives no justification for this rather literal, or bodily, interpretation of the word beyond referencing its two different meanings as elucidated in the entry on “verstellen” in Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch* (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1854-1960) vol. 25, 1727, c and vol. 25, 1729, 3c/4. Mundt’s juxtaposition of Sophonisbe’s use of ‘verstellt’ with the unambiguous use of ‘verstellen’ as ‘verbergen’ in the “Widmungsvorrede,” 107 and iv, 95 doesn’t successfully demonstrate that Sophonisbe doesn’t use it in that sense at ii, 377. Moreover, Mundt’s understanding of ‘fleckt’ as ‘befleckt’ and ‘besudelt’ would seem at the very least to allow, if not confirm my reading. And interestingly, Mundt fails to juxtapose this scene of religious cross-dressing with its clear description in the preface as “Vermummung.” See Daniel Casper von Lohenstein, *Sämtliche Werke: Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, ed. Lothar Mundt, Wolfgang Neuber, and Thomas Rahn (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2013) section II, vol. 3.2, 985.

particular still differentiated between ‘dissimulatio,’ or ‘Verstellung,’ as the hiding and controlling of one’s true affects and intentions and ‘simulatio,’ or ‘Stellung,’ as the act of pretending to have or be something one isn’t—even as it and he began to use the single term ‘Verstellung’ to refer to the two types of pretense, or ‘Verstellungskünste.’³⁰ Thus, we must first ask ourselves, to which of the two kinds of ‘Verstellungskünste’ does Sophonisbe refer to in her denial? Before we can answer this question, however, it is important to note that the above distinction between ‘Verstellung’ and ‘Stellung,’ between merely hiding what is the case and actively presenting an untruth in the place of the truth has its roots in the rhetorical tradition, and more particularly, in Tacitus’ writings on prudence as they have been received by Diego Saavedra Fajardo and Baltasar Gracián. Played out first and foremost in the political world of the court, the ‘Verstellungskünste’ enter via Gracián’s writings into everyday life when it is recognized that the un-princely must also reckon with their neighbors’ diverging interests and motives. Like princes, the lay person must attempt to discern these motives as best she can through close and constant observation of the (dis)simulated manner in which her counterparts speak, act, comport, and represent themselves. But it isn’t only the behaviors of others that require their attention: the un-princely must also closely manage their own deportment in order to ensure that it doesn’t inadvertently reveal something about their own intentions.³¹

³⁰ See the chapter “Simulation, Dissimulation und erotische Verführung” in Meyer-Kalkus, *Wollust und Grausamkeit*, in particular 154 sqq. for the theoretical distinction between ‘simulatio’ and ‘dissimulatio’ as well as Geitner, *Die Sprache der Verstellung*, 24-29.

³¹ See Geitner, *Die Sprache der Verstellung*, Chapter Three, in particular 11-30, and Barner, *Barockrhetorik*, 99 sqq. Given the prominence of the discourse about (dis)simulatio in early modernity, reading these strategies in Sophonisbe’s behavior as culturally coded would seem to be somewhat problematic. See Claudia Breger, “Die Rhetorik kultureller Differenz in D. C. v. Lohensteins ‘Afrikanischen Trauerspielen’,” *Zeitschrift für Germanistik*, Neue Folge XIV.2 (2004): 265-282, in particular 272-76.

But Sophonisbe's concern at lines 376-77 isn't behavior; it's clothing.³² The Numidian queen worries that clothing can, with regard to the physical body it protects, be seen to replicate and externalize the very relation of (dis)simulation that I've just described between a person's observable 'outward' behavior and her unspoken 'inner' affects, intentions and motives. What makes Sophonisbe anxious is the way that clothing, as that with which we cover ourselves, functions to replace the body as the projection screen upon which can be presented a multitude of information about the self, information that will be read by others; information that can include that self's likes and dislikes, its social standing, and perhaps most fundamentally, its gender and biological sex.³³ Now, clothing can, as Sophonisbe's reference to her own clothing as "Frauen=" and "Weiber=Kleider" (i, 375; i, 379) and to Vermina's as "Helden=Tracht" (i, 378) makes clear, of course perfectly correspond to the biological sex of the body it shrouds. In such a case, clothing stands in a relation of sincerity to the body. But clothing cannot, in Lohenstein's *Sophonisbe*, readily externalize the relation of *dissimulation*. At least, it would be difficult to imagine a case where attire could be used merely to hide biological sex. For where one assumes—as I think the play does—that there are only two sexes, successfully hiding the 'femaleness' of a body necessarily implies that that body is male

³² See Elizabeth Krimmer, *In the Company of Men: Cross-dressed Women around 1800* (Detroit: Wayne State UP, 2004) 2. Citing Joanne Entwistle, *The Fashioned Body: Fashion, Dress, and Modern Social Theory* (Cambridge: Polity P, 2000), Krimmer notes that what is at stake in scenes of cross-dressing is more than just clothing; these scenes essentially concern the body at a particular historical and cultural moment.

³³ For a general discussion of clothing in seventeenth-century literature and drama, see Wilfried Barner, *Barockrhetorik*, 112-114, 119-120, and 139 as well as Richard Alewyn, *Das große Welttheater: Die Epoche der höfischen Feste* (München: Beck, 1989) 40-47. As opposed to the bourgeois understanding of clothing in the eighteenth century, clothing in the seventeenth century need not be congruent with the imagined 'inner' qualities of a person. See Heiner Weidmann, "Rhetorik der Kleidung um 1800," *Dazwischen: Zum transitorischen Denken in Literatur- und Kulturwissenschaft*, ed. Johannes Anderegg et al. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003) 215-234, in particular 225: "Incarnatio ist also um 1800 an die Stelle von exornatio getreten." For a discussion of the link between clothing and gender in a ritualized context, see Christina A. Clark, "To Kneel or Not to Kneel: Gendered Nonverbal Behavior in Greek Ritual," *Journal of Religion and Society*, Supplement Series 5 (2009): 6-20.

and vice versa. And when sartorial choices fail to correspond to the biological sex of the body beneath them, then what is externalized is the relation of simulation: such clothing *necessarily* presents the body it conceals as being a sex which that body isn't.³⁴ Thus, what's going on in the scene of religious sacrifice near the end of Act One is clearly not an instance of dissimulation, or 'Verstellung,' but rather of simulation, or 'Stellung:' a young man puts on silk and a skirt in order to simulate being the woman he isn't and can never be. A woman puts on armor in order to simulate being the man she isn't and can never be. That the act of cross-dressing constitutes an act of simulation is also indicated by Sophonisbe's use of the verb "flecken." The verb plainly acknowledges and reflects the understanding, widespread in the seventeenth century and expounded by the dedicatory preface,³⁵ that while dissimulation constitutes an appropriate and fully acceptable means for securing one's happiness, simulation is, at least theoretically, tantamount to lying and therefore to be avoided as morally untenable in most circumstances.³⁶

And yet, we have seen that Sophonisbe couches the admission that cross-dressing necessarily constitutes a morally questionable instance of pretense, one that would "stain" Vermina's character and reputation, within an assertion that the very opposite is in fact the case. "Die Andacht macht: daß sich ein Held mit unser Seide / Hier nicht verstellt und fleckt" (i, 376-77), she assures her stepson. It is the religious sacrifice qua ceremony, qua rite that renders their acts of cross-dressing not so much insincere, as neither insincere nor sincere. The religious sacrifice qua ceremony, qua rite clearly marks their acts of

³⁴ See Geitner, *Die Sprache der Verstellung*, 25.

³⁵ I will have more to say about the preface below. See p. 109 of this chapter.

³⁶ See Geitner, *Die Sprache der Verstellung*, 30, especially footnote 57, and Meyer-Kalkus, *Wollust und Grausamkeit*, 15.

cross-dressing as a *performance* in which the signs are *not* meant to be read as the manifestation or expression of anything about their own bodies.³⁷ Sophonisbe's assertion reads as an insight into the nature and power of the ceremonial rite to suspend the operation of simulation.³⁸ In fact, her assertion is equally about context. This is because rites and ceremonies are necessarily circumscribed, tied to a particular moment, a particular place, a particular custom and occasion. But formal ceremonial rites are few and far between. As such they can offer only the briefest of reprieves from accusations that cross-dressing, and more generally, the act of donning another's garments, always amounts to an offense of simulation.

It would appear, then, that the remaining occurrences of the Numidian royal family's clothing changes must be considered instances of disguise and deception. Certainly, this is true of the second instance of sartorial exchange, in which Syphax orders Vermina to remove the queen's silk and skirt and put on "ein Römisch Kleid" in order to pass himself off among the enemy soldiers as a "Römisch Kriegs=Knecht" (ii, 259). And while disguise also accurately describes Sophonisbe's intent when, garbed in an enemy uniform, she breaks into the Roman prison that holds her husband in the very moment in which he is about to take his life, and Syphax's objective when he puts on the same uniform in order to escape, it is significant that these actions aren't presented on

³⁷ The performative dimension of the religious sacrifice in this scene is underscored by the dedicatory preface, which presents the play itself as a sacrifice: "Nimm dieses Trauerspiel zum Opfer von mir an" ("Widmungsgedicht," 1). For a discussion of the logic of sacrifice in *Sophonisbe*, see Armin Schaefer, "Versuch über Souveränität und Moral im barocken Trauerspiel," *Bann der Gewalt: Studien zur Literatur- und Wissensgeschichte*, ed. Maximilian Bergengruen and Roland Borgards (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2009) 387-431, in particular: 425-27. For a critical assessment of the secondary literature on the significance of sacrifice in *Sophonisbe* see Thomas Borgstedt, "Die Erfindung der Tragödie als panegyrisches Opferspiel in Lohensteins *Sophonisbe*," *Wolfenbütteler Barock-Nachrichten* 37 (2010) 1/2, 47-63, in particular 60-63.

³⁸ A thorough analysis of the semiotics of ceremonies and rites can be found in Wolfgang Braungart, *Ritual und Literatur* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1996).

stage.³⁹ These unseen moments of disguise and deception function only to bracket the real focus of the play's third scene of cross-dressing—namely Sophonisbe's rescue of Syphax—a scene in which she doesn't use her stolen uniform to conceal her identity from her husband, but to reveal it to him *more dramatically*:

Syphax. Ich hoffe nun nichts mehr von Menschen oder Göttern.
Sophon. Dir blickt ein Sonnenstrahl schon nach so grausen Wettern.
Syphax. Ein Sonnenstrahl? von wem?
Sophon. Von mir.
Syphax. Ach! falsches Liecht!
 Elende Sonne! gib' mir's Messer!
Sophon. Kennst du nicht
 Mehr deine Sophonisb'.
Syphax. Ihr Götter!

(ii, 247-251)

It might be objected that to exploit her cross-dressed appearance in this way isn't at all surprising: they are after all husband and wife, and why would she want to disguise herself from Syphax? A straightforward, more persuasive test case would be the queen's two remaining cross-dressed encounters with her enemy, the traitorous Numidian general Masinissa, and it is to these episodes that I want to turn now.

3.2 A Few Striking Peculiarities about Sophonisbe's Cross-dressed Dalliances with the Enemy

Sophonisbe and Masinissa's initial run-in takes place toward the beginning of Act Two in the Numidian palace:

Masin. Such nebst Verminen auf die stoltze Königin
 Die diesen Brand gebohrt. Die schleppt in Kercker hin!
Sophon. Durchlauchtigst-grosser Fürst; Großmächt'ger Überwinder/
 Erbarm dich *deiner Magd und ihrer armen Kinder*;
 Die sich fußfällig dir zu deinen Füßen legt.

³⁹ The still disguised Syphax turns up again in Act Three as one of three captive Africans whom Sophonisbe intends to kill after Bogudes refuses Lelius' order to do so. See iii, 339 sqq.

Masin. Was? ist *dis* eine Magd die Helm und Harnisch trägt?
Sophon. Ja! *es ist Sophonisbe*’/ ein Haß der leichten Götter/
(ii, 73-79; emphasis mine, A.N.)

Their second meeting transpires in the Roman prison from which Sophonisbe has released her husband, shortly before the end of Act Two. It begins:

Sophon. Ja! Masinissa/ ja! vollstrecke deine Rache!
Du hast nicht schlechten Grund/ ich eine böse Sache.
Masin. Reitzt der Verzweifelte mich selbst zum straffen an?
Sophon. Weil/ ausser durch den Tod/ ich nicht genesen kan.
Masin. Weil du dich selbst verdammst und deine böse Lüste/
So kriege Tod und Stich.
Sophon. Ja stoß durch *diese Brüste*!
Masin. Hilf Himmel! ich erstarr!
Sophon. Wie? daß der Dolch enfällt?
Masin. Wie? hat der Syphax sich in eine Frau verstellt?
Laß’ uns dis Wunder=Werck was eigen doch betrachten!
Sophon. Wil Masanissa nicht *mich Sophonisbe* schlachten?
(ii, 315-324; emphasis mine, A.N.)

The first thing to notice about the queen’s two skirmishes with Masinissa is that they occur when she happens, as a result of previous plot twists involving her family, to already find herself in drag. In other words, Sophonisbe doesn’t clothe herself in menswear with the express intent to conceal herself from her enemy: she’s already unrecognizable to him in the moment he storms on stage, and at least in the first encounter, could easily flee. But rather than attempting to escape or at the very least to remain disguised, the Numidian queen chooses both times to almost immediately expose herself to Masinissa as biologically ‘female’ before then going on to identify herself as Sophonisbe. Given these revelations, it seems safe to conclude that, unlike Vermina’s Roman uniform, the queen’s ‘masculine’ armor doesn’t function as a sign to convincingly and enduringly mislead its reader into attributing a false identity or sex or both back to the body beneath it. But though the queen doesn’t wear her armor in the

straightforwardly duplicitous way that Syphax has instructed Vermina to wear the enemy uniform, it would be hasty to assume the opposite: that she wears and speaks about the armor and its relation to her body and person in a sincere manner. Indeed, I shall be arguing that we must turn away from the oppositional rubric of sincerity and insincerity (or pretense) that tells us very little when applied to Sophonisbe's acts of cross-dressing and subsequent disrobing in order to find a different way of reading not only these scenes of cross-dressing in Lohenstein's play, but also Sophonisbe herself.

To do so is to begin to pick up on the ways in which the queen's not insincere replies to Masinissa do more than simply give him the 'facts' about her person. It is to recognize, first, the strikingly demonstrative quality of her initial words to the general: the way in which those words, which point to their speaker not just as the mother of children but more explicitly as the *Gebärmutter*, or womb, that has borne these children,⁴⁰ are designed to direct the general's attention to the bare 'fact' of her sexed body. *It is this body*—the very one that Sophonisbe has only just a moment ago gendered for Masinissa when she proclaimed it to be a girl, and moreover his girl—that *will be strategically deployed as the unmarked, or material, ground of all subsequent claims that the queen will make about herself to the general.*⁴¹ It is to register, secondly, the disparity between the queen's two responses to Masinissa's disbelieving queries about the

⁴⁰ Sophonisbe's pleading directive "Erbarm dich deiner Magd und ihrer armen Kinder" achieves this effect precisely by exploiting Masinissa's use of the participle "gebohrt" in the relative clause "Die diesen Brand gebohrt" that modifies "Königin." Certainly, Masinissa means the clause figuratively. But the proximity of "gebohrt" to "Verminen," and the possibility that "diesen Brand" might refer to him, work to inspire a more literal misreading of the clause to mean that Sophonisbe has given birth, or form, to Vermina. Such a misreading is of course only slightly misin-form-ed: for Sophonisbe is, after-all, Vermina's step-mother. Here I am suggesting that both Lohenstein's text and its heroine are invoking the etymologies linking the terms matter (*materia*) with mother (*mater*) and womb (*matrix*) in order to establish Sophonisbe's female body as the material ground of her gender and sexuality. Cf. the etymologies for "Mutter," Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch* (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1854-1960) vol. 12, 2804-06; "Gebärmutter," *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, vol. 4, 1651; "Materie," *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, vol. 12, 1751-54. Cf. also Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'* (New York: Routledge, 1993) 31 sqq.

⁴¹ See Butler, *Bodies that Matter*, 1-4, 7-8, 10, 30.

‘femaleness’ of the armored man he sees before him, upon first storming the palace and then in Syphax’ prison cell. By adopting, in the palace scene, her enemy’s confused viewpoint and choosing to use the impersonal “es ist Sophonisb” rather than the personal “ich bin Sophonisb,” the queen becomes a third person observer and disappears, as it were, from the stage. As a result, the just mentioned name ‘Sophonisbe’ becomes associated not with the ruler of the Numidians, but attached to the anatomically ‘female’ “Magd” in drag. The purpose of the emphatically ‘personal’ “Wil Masinissa nicht *ich Sophonisbe* schlachten” given in answer to Masinissa’s similarly incredulous outburst in the dungeon aims, by contrast, to remind the general of this biologically ‘female’ and, as we will see in a moment, highly ‘feminine’ “Magd,” whom he had encountered earlier. And it is to observe, finally, that the two acts of ‘self’-naming about which we’ve just been speaking also constitute the initial lines of the two lengthy speeches that Sophonisbe will go on to give—speeches that, though much more complex and sustained in their execution, aren’t dissimilar to the gender performances that she and Vermina carried out for the goddess during the religious ceremony in Act One. Indeed, I will ultimately be claiming that the only real difference between the queen’s earlier performance for the goddess and her subsequent ones for Masinissa is that she strives, in the latter, to establish a ‘female’ rather than a ‘male’ gender identity.

To view Sophonisbe’s behavior in this way is, of course, to posit a distinction between her person, or identity, and the ‘female’ body to which she points as well as the gender identity she avows, and to understand the relation between the three as contingent rather than necessary. It is, moreover, to assert that the range of Sophonisbe’s behavioral responses to any particular situation in which she finds herself is neither determined nor

limited by the ‘fact’ of her biological sex, and that it is those *exhibited* behaviors that constitute her identity rather than vice versa. And it is, finally, to deny that her gender behavior and identity must be false, insincere, a pretense, a disguise, or as Judith Butler puts it toward the beginning of *Gender Trouble*, “an artifice,”⁴² if it doesn’t turn out to correspond to her ‘factual’ biological sex. In the next section, I want to examine first the practical and then the theoretical arguments for understanding Sophonisbe’s two meetings with Masinissa as akin to the cross-dressed religious performance conducted together with Vermina in Act One. But before I do, let me pause here to acknowledge the similarities between this notion of identity as performance that I’m attributing to Lohenstein and Judith Butler’s thesis about gender identity as performativity. As I did just a moment ago, I shall be pointing to instances of confluence between Butler and Lohenstein throughout the analysis of Sophonisbe’s confrontations with Masinissa. At the same time, however, I want to emphasize that I take this radical conception of identity as performance to be immanent to Lohenstein’s play and the scene of religious sacrifice in Act One, and what is more, to the (somewhat less radical) seventeenth century in which his play is embedded.

3.2.1.1 Sophonisbe’s First Cross-dressed Encounter with Masinissa: Behavioral and Rhetorical Strategies of the ‘female’ and the ‘feminine’

On what grounds can Sophonisbe’s first long speech in Act Two (ii, 79-111; ii, 114-130) be understood as a performance of conventionally ‘female’ identity, and to what end does she perform this gender identity? In answering these questions, we shall have to begin by directing attention to the rhetoric that Sophonisbe employs and to the behavior that she

⁴² Butler, *Gender Trouble* (New York: Routledge, 1990) viii.

displays over the course of her speech. But before we do, it is necessary to acknowledge a fundamental difficulty about our two questions. They imply, namely, that Sophonisbe's verbal and nonverbal actions, her gestures, and her way of carrying herself do not amount to an expressively lived experience of her 'female' body, but rather constitute the means by which it comes to be figured—by whom or by what? by herself?—as 'feminine.' The problem, though, is how can we tell the difference. It's an issue that we will have to bear in mind as we work our way through her speech.

What is immediately striking about Sophonisbe's speech is the rhetorically mediated way in which she refers to herself throughout the first half of her address to Masinissa. For even when we set aside—for the moment—the complicated claim she makes regarding her relationship to fate, it's impossible to overlook her repeated placement of herself into relation with the other whom she speaks to, and her recurrent third-person characterizations of herself as "Weib," "Sclavin," "Mohrin," "Magd," "des Syphax Frau," and of course "sie"—characterizations that she makes on the basis, presumably, of her anatomical sex. Where she does utilize a first-person pronoun to refer to herself ("Daß *mein* gescheutert Schif," ii, 84; "Vergib *mir*," ii, 86, emphasis mine; A.N.), that usage isn't long sustained. Indeed, she continually slips back into the third-person for much of the soliloquy. And when Sophonisbe does finally adopt the "ich" (ii, 92)—no less than fourteen lines into her soliloquy—that affirmation of her subjectivity is quickly subsumed under the more general category of "Mohrin" as well as once again placed in an object relation to Masinissa himself. Note also that these 'female' gender designations correspond in turn to a series of gendered behaviors that inscribe both Sophonisbe and the general in a ritual-like scene of supplication. These behaviors include

Sophonisbe asking for forgiveness for the transgression that she is about to commit by touching Masinissa's knee, kneeling at his feet, acknowledging his power and subjugating herself to him, kissing his hand, and addressing him entreatingly (ii, 86-96). What she wishes for, however, isn't "geneigten Frieden / . . . Leben/ Kron und Reich" or even "Freyheit," but rather for a death that would free her from the cruel indignities of life: "Nein! Sophonisbe stirbt begierig/ wo sie kan" (ii, 96-98).

In communicating not heroic defiance, but resignation, weak acceptance of defeat, and the kind of *Lebensmüdigkeit* that in seventeenth-century German drama so often heralds imminent death,⁴³ Sophonisbe's wish seems calculated to engage her enemy's sympathy for a specifically 'feminine' victim. At least, that is the effect it has upon Masinissa, who responds by gallantly exhorting his captive as follows: "Auf! *schönste* Königin/ sie darf kein Knie hier beugen / Sie melde: was sie drückt. Was hat sie zu befehlen?"⁴⁴ (ii, 112-13; my emphasis, A.N.). But it's here that the reader stumbles upon a contradiction: a first definitive indication that Sophonisbe's patently 'feminine' behaviors are not so much 'correctly' gendered—i.e. the straightforward manifestation of her anatomically 'female' sex—as gendering—i.e. by virtue of being associated with women rather than men, these behaviors mark Sophonisbe as 'feminine' in the moment that she displays them—, and that the scene of supplication into which they draw Masinissa also genders him. For soon after hearing Masinissa's empathetic invitation, Sophonisbe tells the general that if he cannot in fact protect her from the Romans, then he should "treib die schöne Schwerdt (ich schmecke schon die Lust!) / Durch meiner Kinder Leib in Sophonisbens Brust" (ii, 125-126).

⁴³ See Barner, *Barockrhetorik*, 112-13 for the connection between disillusion—both in the theatrical and existential sense—and death.

⁴⁴ For more on the implications of Masinissa's use of "befehlen," see p. 77 of this chapter.

In her book chapter on *Sophonisbe*, Jane O. Newman characterizes the queen's exclamation as an instance of "virale," 'male'-coded behavior.⁴⁵ Such an attribution of masculinity predicates an understanding of gender as constructed on Newman's part—for as described by Lohenstein's text and *Sophonisbe* herself, the queen's 'female' form lacks the 'male' anatomical accoutrements that could be used to account for this virility in an expressivist or essentialist way. Given her notion of gender as constructed, it's odd that Newman, building on Luce Irigaray's essay "The Sex Which Is Not One," should then go on to posit repeatedly that *Sophonisbe*'s gender identity is "hybrid," "dual," "divided," and "split."⁴⁶ For 'split,' unlike Irigaray's notions of "diffuse," "multiple," and "not one," makes it very easy to hear the number two, and the binary "either . . . or." Precisely such a characterization of *Sophonisbe* as "split" allows the queen to transcend her 'femaleness' by adopting 'male' behavior at the same time that it reaffirms the biological dichotomy of the sexes by assuming that there exist 'masculine' and 'feminine' ways of behaving. Indeed, Newman seems to make this assumption of a binary opposition explicit when she goes on to ask repeatedly whether *Sophonisbe* is "acting in a masculine or a feminine way."⁴⁷ *Sophonisbe*, according to Newman's reading of Lohenstein's mourning play,

⁴⁵ Jane O. Newman, *The Intervention of Philology: Gender, Learning, and Power in Lohenstein's Roman Plays* (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 2000) 50.

⁴⁶ Newman, *Intervention*, 47-48 and 50. For Newman, the splitting of gender identity is causally linked and made visible by those moments in which *Sophonisbe* dresses in 'male' armor and clothing.

⁴⁷ Newman poses her question on behalf of the Breslau schoolboy-actors, for whom the performance and study of *Sophonisbe* was, she argues, part of their political training to become astute bureaucrats in the context of a Silesia that, as part of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, owed obedience to Habsburg Vienna—or the new Rome. The task set these young pupils, according to Newman, was to determine how to read Lohenstein's play about the triumph—both on the actual battlefield and within the person of the African turncoat Masinissa—of ancient Roman culture and values over 'uncivilized' Africa in the Second Punic Wars. Though the play would seem to advocate allegiance to the Habsburgs by way of the Romans, and to code—I assume by means of the dedicatory preface as well as the oppositional choices that Masinissa makes—the identity 'Roman male' as rational and worthy of emulation and 'African female' as "outlandish" and worthy of abjuration, Newman contends that *Sophonisbe*'s simultaneously 'feminine' and 'masculine' gender identity makes it much more difficult for these future bureaucrats to take Masinissa's example as a model for their own future political lives. Indeed, she ultimately concludes that

possesses the capacity how ‘masculine’ or ‘feminine’ she wants to be, and depending upon that decision, to then behave in this or the other manner. Thus, while Newman grants Sophonisbe the freedom to be ‘masculine,’ she ultimately imprisons her within a binary set piece in which all behavior corresponds to one of two genders. In so constraining the Numidian queen, Newman ultimately renders Lohenstein’s heroine vulnerable to the very charges of perversity, abnormality, and insincerity from which she would profess to free her.

But if such clear-cut, binary distinctions can be said to exist *at all*, then Newman’s own initial characterization of Sophonisbe’s suicidal inclinations—the above exclamation is only one of three plans the Numidian queen hatches to bring about her own death—as “virile” would seem to imply that they can be found only on the level of ‘factual’ biological sex. On the level of gender, which feminists have long agreed remains neither historically nor culturally constant,⁴⁸ no such dichotomy can be found, and a wide spectrum of behaviors is possible. And while some of these many behaviors may happen to coincide with traditional conceptions of what constitutes ‘masculine’ or

they “might profitably consider the behavior of a woman ruler [i.e. the African Sophonisbe] as exemplary.” See *Intervention*, 49, 51, and 58. For a fuller synopsis of Newman’s argument, see my footnote 98. For more on the standard understanding of the play’s apparently oppositional coding of African versus Roman, ‘female’ versus ‘male’, and passion versus reason, see Barner, “Disponibile Festlichkeit,” 256 as well as Breger, “Die Rhetorik,” 265-282. For more on the place of dramatic presentations as a tool of rhetorical education in Protestant schools, see Wilfried Barner, *Barockrhetorik*, 302-320; David Halsted, “From School Theater to *Trauerspiel*: Lohenstein’s *Agrippina* as Systemic Analysis,” *Daphnis* 22 (1993): 621-39; Dilwyn Knox, “Order, Reason and Oratory: Rhetoric in Protestant Latin Schools,” *Renaissance Rhetoric*, ed. Peter Mack (London: Macmillan, 1994) 63-80; and Konradin Zeller, *Pädagogik und Drama: Untersuchungen zur Schulcomödie Christian Weises* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1980).

⁴⁸ The term “gender” was conceived by feminists in the 1970s and 1980s to question the notion that primary sexual characteristics determined one’s destiny. Unlike the biology of sexual difference, “gender,” according to feminist theorists, is constructed, and therefore historically and culturally variable. Indeed, these theorists understood gender to be the exercise and accrual of cultural meaning to the naturally sexed body. See Gayle Rubin’s essay “The Traffic in Women: Notes on the ‘Political Economy’ of Sex,” *Toward an Anthropology of Women*, ed. Rayna Reiter (New York: Monthly Review P, 1975) 157-209.

‘feminine’ behavior, such correspondences are ultimately beside the point.⁴⁹ This is nowhere more apparent than in the specific case of Sophonisbe’s stated desire to be killed rather than captured and humiliated, since it’s not at all clear—even, I think, to Sophonisbe herself—whether she means her incitement to her own murder literally or whether her words in fact constitute a desperate and wily gambit to seduce, a gambit that some would argue might better be described as ‘feminine.’ For indeed, Sophonisbe’s demand that Masinissa kill her (*hetero*)sexualizes—“ich schmecke schon die Lust” (ii, 125)—the violent act of her own murder by presenting it in terms of the sword’s phallus-like penetration of a distinctly ‘female’ body—“Durch meiner Kinder Leib in Sophonisbens Brust” (ii, 126).⁵⁰ It’s not by chance that Sophonisbe builds up to this

⁴⁹ This is Judith Butler’s point in *Gender Trouble* when she takes the by the 1980s widely accepted distinction between ‘sex’ and ‘gender’ to its logical conclusion. Butler writes: “If gender is the cultural meanings that the sexed body assumes, then a gender cannot be said to follow from a sex in any one way. Taken to its logical limit, the sex/gender distinction suggests a radical discontinuity between sexed bodies and culturally constructed genders. Assuming for the moment the stability of binary sex, it does not follow that the construction of “men” will accrue exclusively to the bodies of males or that “women” will interpret only female bodies. Further, even if the sexes appear to be unproblematically binary in their morphology and constitution (which will become a question), there is no reason to assume that genders ought also to remain as two. The presumption of a binary gender system implicitly retains the belief in a mimetic relation of gender to sex whereby gender mirrors sex or is otherwise restricted by it. When the constructed status of gender is theorized as radically independent of sex, gender itself becomes a free-floating artifice, with the consequence that *man* and *masculine* might just as easily signify a female body as a male one and *woman* and *feminine* a male body as easily as a female one” ([New York: Routledge, 1990] 6). Butler acknowledges being inspired in part by Foucault, who makes a similar observation in the *History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Random House, 1980) 154, quoted by Butler in her essay “Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory,” *Theatre Journal* 40 (1988): 519-31, here: 524.

⁵⁰ Sophonisbe’s eroticization of her own murder recalls the genre of the *Märtyrerdrama*, in which the martyr, more often than not female (see Gryphius’s *Catharina von Georgien* or Lohenstein’s *Epicharis*), endures the ritualistic torture and theatrical, sexualized penetration of her body, as often as not meted out on behalf of a despotic male gaze, to be joined, in death, to Christ. See Christopher Wild, *Theater der Keuschheit: Keuschheit des Theaters* (Freiburg i. Brsg: Rombach, 2003) 96-99 and 109-110. For more on the topos of the *sponsa Dei*, the scene of torture as *Bluthochzeit*, and “lustvoller Tod” in Gryphius’ works, see Hans-Jürgen Schings, “Catharina von Georgien: Oder Bewehrte Beständigkeit,” *Die Dramen des Andreas Gryphius: Eine Sammlung von Einzelinterpretationen*, ed. Gerhard Kaiser (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1968) 35-72, especially 69-70, as well as Hans-Jürgen Schings, *Die patristische und stoische Tradition bei Andreas Gryphius: Untersuchungen zu den Dissertationes funebres und Trauerspielen*, Köln/Graz: Böhlau, 1966, 264-276, and Dirk Niefanger, *Geschichtsdrama der frühen Neuzeit 1495-1773* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2005) 172. For Wild’s analysis of the same phenomenon in Lohenstein’s *Epicharis*, see *Theater der Keuschheit*, 88-90.

depiction of heterosexual climax by again referring to herself as “mich Magd/ mich Sclavin” (ii, 124) and by openly confessing a weakness—“der Römer Ketten / Beängstigen mein Hertz” (ii, 115-16)—as well as the hope that Masinissa might save her—“Kan mich der Fürst erretten . . .” (ii, 116). Given this basic ambiguity in intention, it would appear that the import of Sophonisbe’s suicidal directive lies not in its at best uncertain ‘manliness,’ but rather in its double-meaning: in the way that Sophonisbe’s use of the imperative stands in stark and telling contrast to her surrounding language of entreaty *while also simultaneously* constituting yet one more instance of the manner in which she has used and continues to use her words to emphasize the ‘femininity’ of her ‘given’ ‘female’ biology. I want to propose that Sophonisbe’s suicidal outburst amounts not so much to legibly heroic or patriotic ‘male’ gender behavior as to submissive and auto-aggressive gender-neutral behavior. That is, Sophonisbe deploys the grammatical imperative that she is in no position to enforce upon Masinissa in order to negotiate and control the terms of her political submission to him by scripting and staging it as a sexual one in which she plays, or performs, the submissive, erotic, ‘feminine’ woman.

We can now say that the same holds for the behaviors, verbal and non-verbal, which she displays toward the beginning of her speech. In behaving weakly and in a subservient manner, in kneeling before Masinissa, or in casting herself, for example, as a

From Shakespeare to the Spanish *comédia nueva*, there exists a long tradition that figures the sword as phallus. In the context of seventeenth-century German texts, Christopher Wild, who examines the ways in which Gryphius and Lohenstein’s texts stage the sexualization of political intrigue and the politicization of sexual relations (*Theater der Keuschheit*, 72), shows that the sovereign’s desire for territorial and political expansion originates from the same source as his “Liebe-trieb,” and that erotic conquests or setbacks merely represent an extension of war, albeit with other means: “Mit einem Streich erstreitet und durchschneidet das phallische Schwert fremde Territorien und verstockte Frauen, die wechselseitig füreinander eintreten” (90). This link can of course become a potentially problematic distraction for the sovereign, particularly one who attempts to compensate for military or political setbacks by pursuing erotic pleasures. Wild explores the phenomenon specifically in the instances of Gryphius’ Chach Abas and Lohenstein’s Ibrahim Sultan (90-91), and goes on to demonstrate how unrequited erotic advances can revert to instances of deadly violence for the martyrs (94 sqq.).

“Weib,” “Magd,” and as Masinissa’s “Sclavin,” Sophonisbe is not being her anatomically ‘female’ body, but rather deploying and reproducing—Butler speaks in *Gender Trouble* of “repetition” and later, drawing on Derrida, of “forced citation”—existing gender practices and cultural codes that, by seeming to confirm that ‘female’ body, figure her as ‘feminine.’⁵¹ Notice, though, that the reproductions and citations of these practices and codes do not result in the kind of re-signification that Butler asserts they may at times become open to,⁵² since Sophonisbe deploys them in the ‘normal’ way. That is: she asserts that heterosexuality follows from ‘femininity,’ which follows in turn from ‘femaleness.’ But she does so knowingly, deftly, and exploitatively, as part of an attempt to maneuver herself into an advantage.

3.2.1.2 *Existential Grounds for Considering Sophonisbe’s First Speech a Performance*

I have been considering the ways in which Sophonisbe’s words and actions constitute the practical basis for understanding her first speech to Masinissa as a spontaneously staged *performance* of ‘female’ gender identity that is itself constructed upon the ostentatious presentation of her ‘female’ assets. But there exists a second, more fundamental reason for understanding her speech as such. Sophonisbe alludes to it when she presents herself as “ein Haß der leichten Götter/ Ein Ball des falschen Glücks/ ein Ziel der Unglücks=Wetter; Vor eine Königin/ itzt deine schlechte Magd” (ii, 79-81). These lines, which follow immediately upon what we have earlier characterized as the queen’s strikingly self-removed declaration “Ja! es ist Sophonisb’,” work to objectify that already remote third-person self as an obscure plaything in the hands of the forces of a radical

⁵¹ Butler, following Beauvoir, speaks in *Gender Trouble* of this figuration as “repeated stylizations of the body” (33).

⁵² See, for example, Butler, *Bodies that Matter*, 2 and *Undoing Gender* (New York: Routledge, 2004) 27.

impermanence. With this statement, Sophonisbe effectively defines her ‘self’ as a lack:⁵³ as nothing more than the continual, uninterrupted, and coerced playing of a series of oscillating parts. None of these many and often conflicting parts can, moreover, be equated with the ‘real’ Sophonisbe, since none of them can be said to have the kind of permanence associated with an essence. But if Sophonisbe is never essentially queenly nor subservient nor the natural embodiment of any of the other parts which we have seen her play, neither is she anything that might be found behind those parts and opposed to them. How could there be such an essence when her movement from the playing of one part to the playing of the next is seamless and uninterrupted? This thoroughgoing absence of an ‘essence,’ or ‘self,’ is marked in the text by the association of her name in the first line of her speech with the “ja” (ii, 79), and in the very middle of her speech with that affirmative’s exact opposite: the “nein” that cancels it out (ii, 98). Left behind, next to Sophonisbe’s name, is a syntactical lacuna to mark an unavailable ‘truth.’ Its heroine, the text seems to suggest, cannot be known by a consideration of her body and person alone. It is against the background of the ‘self’ as the forced and ceaseless shuffling between the parts that she plays that Sophonisbe’s first address to Masinissa then takes on the full meaning of a performance: of a pragmatic and always-contingent construction of identity through doing. For it means that her identity—who she is at any particular moment during her speech and indeed throughout the mourning play—depends upon the part she portrays, a determination that itself rests upon her understanding of the situation into which she believes fate has thrust her. As an example of this, consider once again the meekly auto-aggressive gender identity that Sophonisbe adopts throughout the second

⁵³ The notion of ‘lack’ in the context of a queen who sexualizes herself for her ‘male’ and ‘masculine’ enemy brings to mind the theories of Freud and Lacan, in which women are defined by their lack, respectively, of a penis and a phallus.

half of her first address to Masinissa. Far from being taken either as the expression of an enduring self or as a simulation, it must be examined in relation to what Masinissa asks her about halfway through their exchange, at line ii, 112-113. As you will recall, it is there that he signals to the watchful Sophonisbe—at least as she understands it—his attraction to her and his receptivity to such aggressively submissive, erotic behavior. It is there that, addressing her as “schönste Königin,” he inquires after what she would command (“befehlen”) him to do. It thus seems clear that in delivering the second half of her speech in the way that she does, Sophonisbe is adopting a pragmatic identity developed under duress and in direct response to what she believes Masinissa has revealed to her about himself.

3.2.1.3 *The Implications of Performance for the Metaphor of the Theatrum Mundi*

One final scene of drag remains to be considered. Before turning to it, let me pause here to lay out a few caveats about the reading I’ve just developed. Most importantly, I want to note that though what Sophonisbe says about her fate at lines ii, 79-81 may happen to read as Butlerian, her words and experience reflect first and foremost the worldview of her author, his text, and his century. The fate Sophonisbe bemoans amounts to yet one more instantiation of the *vanitas* thinking so typical of the seventeenth century.⁵⁴ Having pointed to one of the ways in which Sophonisbe’s complaint about her fate can be correlated to extradiegetic elements, and also recognizing that what she says about that fate accounts, on a diegetic level, for the ‘unstable’ and often ‘contradictory’ quality of her person, it is important to remember that her grievance regarding that fate is also

⁵⁴ For the significance of ‘vanitas’ in early modernity see Ferdinand van Ingen, *Vanitas und Memento Mori in der deutschen Barocklyrik* (Groningen: Wolters, 1966).

already part of the way in which she opts—under duress—to carry out the performance of the lowly maidservant that she happens to be playing as she makes those observations.

Secondly, let me address my preference for the terms “part” and “performance.” It might be argued that, along with the persona of queen, this guise of the maidservant that Sophonisbe plays would be better conceived of as a role than as the performance of a part. For what, you might be wondering, do we gain by adopting the latter concept over the former, more prevalent—both in the seventeenth century and in the work of contemporary critics writing about early modern German drama—one? Wherein lies the difference between the terms? The answer is that where “role” is a theatrical term that, when used metaphorically to characterize the nature of human existence, necessarily brings with it the apparatus of the theater—the director, the audience, the script, the stage, the costumes, props, gesture and blocking,⁵⁵—“performance,” understood in the sense of the doing or carrying out of an action or task, need not imply the various accoutrements of a stage production beyond the acting players. Heeding this difference in the implications of the two terms becomes, I want to suggest, particularly necessary when one turns to an examination of the treatment of (dis)simulation in Lohenstein’s plays, and in particular in the text of his *Sophonisbe*.

Much of the research on Lohenstein has focused precisely on this topic, though critics have largely tended to ignore how the topic unfolds in the plays themselves, including *Sophonisbe*, focusing their analyses instead on the way it is developed within

⁵⁵ Wilfried Barner makes a similar point in *Barockrhetorik* when, having pointed out that the seventeenth-century metaphor of the world-as-theater, or *theatrum mundi*, entails a wide range of meanings and applications which need to be examined and differentiated from one another, he goes on to ask: “Was wird im Welttheater gespielt? Tragödie oder Komödie oder beides? Wird stets das gleiche Stück gespielt, oder wechselt der Spielplan? Wer sind die Zuschauer? Wer kennt die Texte? Wer ist der Spielleiter? Und wer ist der Autor?” (91)

the context of the particular version of the *theatrum mundi* image that Lohenstein lays out in the preface to *Sophonisbe*. Emphasizing the direct influence of Diego Saavedra Fajardo and particularly of Baltasar Gracián upon his work, critics such as Geitner, Meyer-Kalkus, and Barner have pointed out that Lohenstein's understanding of the *theatrum mundi* is a thoroughly political and prudential one.⁵⁶ And indeed, like Gracián's, the world that Lohenstein presents in his plays and in the dedication to Franz von Nesselrode operates largely according to the rules of the court: in the latter as in the former, one finds oneself constantly watched, and nothing is as it appears. What matters is not how things are but how they seem, and as we have seen, one must play for every tactical advantage without being seen to do so. Wilfried Barner, writing about the poem that introduces *Sophonisbe*, has pointed to the way in which Lohenstein's understanding of the *theatrum mundi* is also thoroughly secularized.⁵⁷ The playwright, he notes, still comprehends the world as a stage upon which man must appear and act. The audience, however, includes neither the god who, in the theocentric, Christian version of the *theatrum mundi*, authors, directs, and grants meaning to the action nor the god who, in the more anthropocentric versions of the concept, watches passively from above.⁵⁸ The

⁵⁶ See, for example, Meyer-Kalkus, *Wollust und Grausamkeit*, 13, 74, and the chapter "Simulation, Dissimulation und erotische Verführung," in particular 154 sqq.; Barner, *Barockrhetorik*, 117, 144-146; Barner, "Disponibile Festlichkeit, 266; Heinz Otto Burger, *'Dasein heißt eine Rolle spielen': Studien zur deutschen Literaturgeschichte* (München: Hanser, 1963) 88-90; and Karl-Heinz Mulagk, *Phänomene des politischen Menschen im 17. Jahrhundert: Propädeutische Studien zum Werk Lohensteins unter besonderer Berücksichtigung Diego Saavedra Fajardos und Baltasar Graciáns* (Berlin: Schmidt, 1973) 99 sqq.

⁵⁷ Barner, *Barockrhetorik*, 147. In this, Barner builds on the work of Paul Hankamer, *Deutsche Gegenreformation und deutsches Barock: Die deutsche Literatur im Zeitraum des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1964) 313.

⁵⁸ See Barner, *Barockrhetorik*, 93 and 109. Barner notes that, in addition to the seventeenth century's clearly Christian understanding of the world-as-theater metaphor that takes God to be author, director and audience of the play, there exists what he, following Ernst Robert Curtius, calls the "anthropologische" or "immanent-deskriptive" conception of the metaphor, in which it isn't necessarily God who runs the show. Barner goes on to point out that what such stoical or satirically picturesque versions of the metaphor share with the Christian one is an awareness that the player has not chosen his or her own role, but enacts "einen von außen verliehenen Part." Note, though, that Barner uses "Part" here as a synonym for "Rolle," and

audience in Lohenstein's world is no longer god at all, but other men. Barner goes on to conclude that unlike in Plato, in Shakespeare, in Calderon, in Gryphius, or in Gracián, the metaphor of the stage performance no longer really applies to the world of the dedicatory preface, for Lohenstein has done away with author, director, and a unifying script. For Barner, what remains of the theatrical metaphor in the world set out in Lohenstein's preface is the players who are sanctioned by uncertainty and each other's untrustworthiness to make use of prudent dissemblance in order to pursue their individual survival and happiness.⁵⁹

Despite this conclusion, most critics, including Barner himself, have continued to apply the theatrical concepts of role, costume, disguise, and deception to Lohenstein's texts and characters. And while the attachment to these terms may be appropriate with regard to the characters in, for example, *Cleopatra*, *Agrippina*, and *Epicharis*, I propose that it cannot be stated of Sophonisbe that she is playing a role or several different roles. Certainly, Lohenstein's heroine asserts to Masinissa that she has been explicitly assigned the parts of queen and maidservant by "das Verhängnis" in the manner in which the roles that make up the larger grid of a scripted drama are handed out not only in the theater, but also in the seventeenth-century conception of the world as theater: namely, by the director or by god before the play commences. But while the actors in both of these models are meant to play these prescribed and paradigmatically scripted role or roles to the best of their ability until the drama has come to a particular conclusion,⁶⁰ Sophonisbe

doesn't seek to distinguish the two terms from one another. In his book *'Dasein heißt eine Rolle spielen'*, Heinz Otto Burger also notes that "Im Zeitalter des Barock lebt der Mensch in der Tat weithin sein Leben als Rolle oder als mehrere wechselnde Rollen." (85) He speaks of Bidermann's Philemon Martyr as an actor who takes on many roles. I will address his use of the role in the context of Philemon below.

⁵⁹ Barner, *Barockrhetorik*, 147 and "Disponibile Festlichkeit," 265-266.

⁶⁰ Barner, *Barockrhetorik*, 93 and 109-110. Cf. also Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution," 271 and 279.

operates under the assumption that the outcome of her exchanges with Masinissa has not been established, and that she has the capacity to sway her opponent and alter her fate.⁶¹ Notice that she readily embraces the ‘role’ of queen only when she believes that appearing regal will guarantee her an advantage over her adversary. Dispensing often with regality, she just as avidly confesses herself lowborn, if she judges that doing so puts her in a favorable position vis-à-vis her opponent. The case for understanding Sophonisbe’s speech to Masinissa as a performance of parts rests, however, on more than her movement between and exploitation of her fate-given ‘roles.’ Observe that her play-acting routinely exceeds the parameters of those given ‘roles,’ routinely transcends the paradigms of queenliness and abjection into which she has been thrown.⁶² Sophonisbe, we have seen, continually draws upon existing gender practices and cultural codes to supplement her two fate-given ‘roles’ with a series of smaller, spontaneously adopted parts—“Mohrin,” “Sclavin,” “Priesterin,” “Mutter,” “Weib,” Syphax’s loyal wife, ardent lover—that must, while she inhabits them, be read as constituting her identity. In doing so, she thoroughly radicalizes the lesson of *vanitas* by demonstrating that continual change—the lack of essence—relates not only to societal stature and duties but extends to the categories of ethnicity, nationality, gender and sex—to the ‘material body’ itself. We have seen repeatedly that the body and the ‘self’ are for Sophonisbe never more than a fluid and contingent product of the doing of certain actions and not others. If in the doing of these actions, her performance retains an element of the theatrical, this is because she is obliged to do these actions with her body for an observing other. It is not because she

⁶¹ Barner makes this same point more generally at *Barockrhetorik*, 146 and “Disponibile Festlichkeit,” 266.

⁶² For more on “das Paradigmatische” as a defining concept of the seventeenth century, see Burger, ‘*Dasein heißt eine Rolle spielen*,’ 86.

draws from a larger script to inhabit a series of assigned ‘roles’—‘roles’ that are then taken to stand in contrast to a ‘real self.’

In order to see why this last implication of playing a ‘role’ means that the term cannot be accurately applied to Sophonisbe, it will be helpful to juxtapose Lohenstein’s heroine with the title character of Jacob Bidermann’s *Philemon Martyr*, a flutist and mime by trade but more so by inclination. I want to propose that, more than any other figure of the seventeenth-century German stage, including Lohenstein’s other heroines and characters, Sophonisbe finds a likeness in Philemon Martyr. In his book *‘Dasein heißt eine Rolle spielen,’* Heinz Otto Burger has argued that Bidermann intends for Philemon to function as both a representation and a critique of his seventeenth-century contemporaries, their love of theater, and their approach to life as the playing of a role or series of roles.⁶³ The critique, Burger rightly observes, turns on Bidermann’s portrayal of Philemon’s conversion to Christianity—evidenced by his unwillingness to go through with the sacrifice at the altar of Jupiter and Juno—as the consequence of an “Angelus ex machina” and not as the by-product of his impersonation of the Christian Apollonius, who has paid Philemon to carry out just this rite.⁶⁴ The point of Bidermann’s causal distinction, Burger explains, is to demonstrate that *Schein* is not by definition also *Sein*; Philemon doesn’t become a Christian on the ‘inside’ simply because he has affected the actions and taken on the appearance of one.⁶⁵ But if the Christian convert Philemon is shown by Bidermann’s play to have undergone a particularly un-seventeenth-century experience of existence as being,⁶⁶ neither is the pre-conversion Philemon an altogether

⁶³ Burger, *‘Dasein heißt eine Rolle spielen,’* 83.

⁶⁴ Burger, *‘Dasein heißt eine Rolle spielen,’* 79-80.

⁶⁵ Burger, *‘Dasein heißt eine Rolle spielen,’* 90-91.

⁶⁶ Burger, *‘Dasein heißt eine Rolle spielen,’* 90-91.

accurate example of “den Menschen zu Beginn des 17. Jahrhunderts.” This is because Philemon, who spends much of the first half of the play prior to his encounter with the angel moving continually from the playing of one part to the next as his stomach and chance would have it, constitutes not so much a fleshed out man as the purely formal principle of acting which Bidermann will go on to criticize. Both Bidermann and Burger acknowledge as much: the dramatist when he has Philemon exclaim “Wo war ich, wo? . . . Wo soll ich mich suchen? Denn ich ging verloren. Jupiter, wo finde ich mich?” while pretending to be a drunk;⁶⁷ the critic when he observes that an existence such as Philemon’s lacks the identifying unity of an I. Given this continued absence of an I, it makes little sense to speak of “[V]erfremd[ung]” or to hold on to the concept of a role, as Burger seeks to throughout his analysis.⁶⁸ For to speak of playing a role, as seventeenth-century texts do and as Burger does of Philemon as the epitome of the seventeenth-century man, is necessarily to presume the existence of a player who has a sense of self that exists prior to the roles she plays. This is nowhere clearer than in the texts of Baltasar Gracián, to whom Burger also alludes. Though Gracián asserts that “[d]ie Dinge gelten nicht für das, was sie sind; sondern für das, was sie scheinen,” he in no way foregoes the distinction between the ‘inner’ self and the ‘outer.’⁶⁹ Indeed, he goes on to explain that the reason why *Sein* and *Schein* so often count as the same thing is because people fail to look behind or beneath appearances. Gracián writes: “Selten sind die, welche ins Innere

⁶⁷ Jakob Bidermann, *Philemon Martyr*, ed. Max Wehrli (Köln: Jakob Hegner, 1960) 47; that is Act 1, Scene 5.

⁶⁸ Burger, ‘*Dasein heißt eine Rolle spielen*,’ 76 and 79.

⁶⁹ Baltasar Gracián y Morales, “Wirklichkeit und Schein,” maxim 99 of *Hand-Orakel und Kunst der Weltklugheit: Aus dessen Werken gezogen von Don Vincencio Juan de Lastanosa und aus dem spanischen Original treu und sorgfältig übersetzt von Arthur Schopenhauer*, ed. Alexander Heine (Essen: Phaidon, 1985).

schauen, und Viele die, welche sich an den Schein halten.”⁷⁰ As Burger himself notes, Gracián’s own concept of a role, or *persona*, derives from the Greek expression for ‘mask,’ and is tantamount to what and how one shows oneself to the watchful world.⁷¹ As such, it contrasts with, indeed, is wielded by a self. The role, the *persona* is the theatrical presentation of the self to the world. The pre-conversion Philemon, who has no self because Bidermann seeks to present the seventeenth-century man as an extremely dedicated actor—and therefore all the more easily criticized—does not present himself theatrically by playing a role or roles. There is nothing to Philemon beyond the performances he gives or the parts he does under the duress of his bodily needs and chance meetings; unlike the readers of Gracián’s *Hand-Orakel*, he is always already performatively constituted. As such, he is also the comedic inverse of the tragic, but equally extreme Sophonisbe. Like her, he is no more than the performances he gives and the parts he takes on in an attempt to thwart ignominy, death, and fate.

Where Sophonisbe, the text and the character, differ from Philemon, the text and the character, is clothing. In seventeenth-century life, from the clergy to the court, as well as in literature, from Gryphius to Christian Weise, clothing dictates identity. It is for this reason that Bidermann makes Philemon a mime. As Burger has demonstrated, it is the pre-conversion Philemon’s attire that prescribes the ‘role’—or, as I have argued, the part—that he is to inhabit; it is his attire that marks the shifts and events in his ‘inner.’⁷² But precisely this presumption that one’s garments amount to a role-determining costume underscores both why the notion of “role-”playing ceases to be suitable in Sophonisbe’s

⁷⁰ Gracián y Morales, “Wirklichkeit und Schein.” See also, for example, the *Hand-Orakel*’s third maxim “Ueber sein Vorhaben in Ungewißheit lassen.”

⁷¹ Burger, ‘*Dasein heißt eine Rolle spielen*,’ 89.

⁷² Burger, ‘*Dasein heißt eine Rolle spielen*,’ 75-76.

case, and the extent to which Lohenstein has streamlined his conception of the *theatrum mundi* to exclude everything but the stage and performers who are always also one another's audience. Consider that, in her speech to Masinissa, Sophonisbe neither puts on a costume or costumes to play many versions of herself at various stages of life (Shakespeare) nor to play a single (God-) *given* role as well and as convincingly as possible until the play is over (Calderon), and the costume specific to the role is returned before one dies (Gryphius).⁷³ Rather, Sophonisbe demonstrates that costume no longer governs who one is, but merely the part one has given *oneself* to enact. She shows that playing a part in Lohenstein's world involves giving a performance not so much of a stable, pre-given 'self,' one that is established by one's costume, but of parts that must be determined continually with respect to one's immediate audience. And as Sophonisbe shows, one's performance of the part to be depicted *may best be served by removing the 'masculine' clothes* that one wears.

The recognition of Sophonisbe's first speech to Masinissa as a performance of parts without a prescriptive costume enables us to answer now our original question about the masculine armor in which the queen first appears before the general. That armor functions neither as a disguise intended to deceive, nor is it worn and spoken of with sincerity. This is because Sophonisbe utilizes her cross-dressed appearance neither to attribute a false sex and identity to herself, nor to convey a truth. Instead, she uses it to establish a foil to the performance of 'female' gender identity—an identity that is itself composed of myriad subparts such as, for example, "Magd," "Sclavin," Syphax's steadfast wife—that she then goes on to give. By thus heightening Masinissa's felt perception of that performed 'femininity,' her cross-dressed appearance effectively

⁷³ For these different models see Barner, "Disponibile Festlichkeit," 265-66.

constitutes the starting point of her performance of that identity. As such, it enables the queen to play more effectively the various parts of that identity.

It is time to direct our attention to Sophonisbe's second cross-dressed confrontation with Masinissa. Though it resembles her first meeting with him, it will turn out to be much less clear-cut with regard to the question of whether it constitutes a case of disguise and deception. This is because the episode turns not so much on Sophonisbe wearing male armor as on her wearing Syphax's chains of captivity—chains that she doesn't remove—and on her ability to perform convincingly for Masinissa the wifely devotion to Syphax that she would seem to lack.

3.2.2 Sophonisbe's Second Cross-dressed Encounter with Masinissa

Prior to Sophonisbe's second encounter with Masinissa in the dungeon that only a moment ago held her husband Syphax, we witness her reflecting upon the traitorous general's reaction to her during their initial meeting. Reasoning that he who states that he can empathize with her pain "kan unverliebt nicht sein" (ii, 289-290), she decides to follow through with her plan to abandon Syphax for Masinissa in a way that would make both men perceive her as devoted to and constant in her love for her first husband. Part of that plan, we find out, entails slipping into the dungeon, helping Syphax to escape, and taking his place. The metonymical action of assuming her husband's place in the dungeon cell surely goes a long way in making Masinissa believe, in Scene Five of Act Two, that it is his rival Syphax whom he threatens in a fit of jealous rage. But in Lohenstein's drama as well as in Sophonisbe's mind, the success of the queen's scheme requires that she also draw upon what might be described as the "metaphorical" effect of drag to liken

herself to Syphax in appearance (ii, 326). And Sophonisbe will, of course, achieve this by trading the uniform of the Roman mercenary that she will have been wearing for Syphax's Numidian armor, armor in which she will then face Masinissa for the second time. What's curious, though, about this second cross-dressed interview with Masinissa is that the interest of the play lies not primarily in this particular element of her 'masculine' appearance. We might speculate that the reason for this is redundancy. Like her prior dust-up with Masinissa, the queen's brief turn as Syphax—she and the general have exchanged no more than ten lines of dialogue when she removes her husband's armor and reveals first her breasts and then her name to him⁷⁴—isn't an attempt to impersonate her husband, but the contrast against which she will juxtapose the performance of stereotypical 'female' gender identity that she goes on to give, and thereby to once again augment her enemy's felt perception of her 'femininity.' And like her earlier performance, this one also begins with the queen affecting the gestures of a "säuftzend knie[ende]" "blöde Madg"(ii, 345) eager to escape the Romans at the hands of her savior Masinissa. More interesting to the development of this second interrogation is Sophonisbe's appropriation of the *chains* she has just removed from around her husband. For Sophonisbe, we have already been told, willingly places the chains around her own neck:

Der [sc. Syphax] Sophonisben nicht mit rechte fluchen kan/
 Die seine Ketten bricht und ihr an Hals legt an;
 Die Ketten/ durch die ich selbst traue Masinissen/

⁷⁴ Though he recognizes quickly enough that it is not Syphax who stands in front of him, it is striking just how very slow Masinissa is to comprehend that it is Sophonisbe. As in their first meeting, revelation by disrobing seems entirely inadequate for comprehension in these scenes of cross-dressing. What seems to be required, in addition to wombs and the baring of "female" breasts, is the name and the linguistic act of naming oneself. The point might be to remind the viewer or reader of the pivotal role played by language in every performance. See Barner, *Barockrhetorik*, 89-90, 93, 99, and *passim*. I will consider another implication of Masinissa's slow understanding in the concluding remarks to the chapter. See p. 113 of this chapter.

Als Zeichen meiner Treu' ins Liebes-Garn zuschlüssen.

(ii, 305-308)

If the chains of captivity described here are for Sophonisbe little more than yet another element of Syphax's attire, little more than an extra adornment to be put on before the costume can be considered complete and the performance allowed to begin, the last two lines of the above citation would seem to imply that this accessory, unlike the rest of her outfit, isn't intended to function as the foil to a coming performance. Sophonisbe's phrase "als Zeichen meiner Treu'" suggests that the purpose of the chains is rather to operate as a false sign that, pointing backwards, indicates to Masinissa a piece of incorrect information pertaining to the essence of the queen's person. The chains, it would seem, are designed to mislead Masinissa into believing that Sophonisbe is that which she is not: namely, a steadfast and true wife who out of devotion puts on her husband's chains and willingly dies in his place. Indeed, it seems that Sophonisbe intends to wear the chains precisely because she anticipates that Masinissa will read them as the externalized expression⁷⁵ of a nature that has proven itself to be faithful, or ever constant, even in the face of hardship. Thus, if the chains that Sophonisbe has laid around her neck can indeed be seen as an additional item of clothing, it would seem then that they must be considered an instance of disguise—whereas Sophonisbe will, as we know, go on to remove Syphax's armor in order to expose her anatomically 'female' body, she never once moves to take off the chains—and egregious deception.

⁷⁵ I use this phrase in the sense in which Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 140-141, describes the conventional, pre-performative understanding of gender identity as "expressive."

3.2.2.1 *The Chains of Deception*

I say deception because the particular aspect of ‘femaleness’ or ‘femininity’ on which Sophonisbe’s second performance for Masinissa turns—namely the portrayal of the constant, devoted wife—is calculated to rouse his passion for her such that he will take her for his own spouse. Sophonisbe secures this aim partly by means of a rhetoric that grounds her virtue and wifely devotion *to Syphax* in “heißes Liebes-Feuer” (ii, 332), a trope that both she and Masinissa will then transfer to themselves, deploying not only it but also its variants “Flamm,” “Glut,” “Brunst,” and “Brand” throughout the remainder of the scene to express their own sexual hunger for one another. For her deceptive turn as “the good wife,” Masinissa rewards Sophonisbe with the following promise, a promise he partly fulfills in Act Three by marrying her:

Und meine [Seele] lächst nach dir! Ich sincke für dir nieder!
Ich gebe dir dein Reich mit meiner Seele wieder.
Das Einhorn lägt sein Horn/ das Zepter seiner Macht/
So in der Frauen Schoos. Laß uns/ mein Licht/ bedacht
Stracks auf die Hochzeit sein/ und aus dem Kercker gehen.
Vollzogner Heyrath kan Rom schwerer widerstehen.
(ii, 431-436)

3.2.2.2 *An Egregious Performance of Non-performance*

I characterize the deception as “egregious” because, in acting out ‘wifely’ devotion and constancy, Sophonisbe’s appropriation of her first husband’s chains proves to be more than the straightforward display of a simulated virtue. Her display must be understood as a show that from the outset seeks to deny itself as such and to assure its audience that its actor plays only herself. For how else are we to account for Sophonisbe’s striking ability to deflect Masinissa’s gaze from her glaring transfer of her “Liebes-feuer” for Syphax to himself? What other explanation might there be for the play’s insistence upon

Masinissa's blind and abiding belief in his enemy's assertions of wifely constancy even after she has conceded to him that her "Seele schwimmt / In diesen Flammen auch/ worvon dein Hertze glimmet" and begun to seduce him openly (ii, 391-92)? Given the necessity of this conclusion that Sophonisbe's performance of devotion and constancy seeks to present itself as non-performance, the question then becomes how it achieves this feat. The answer, as I'll demonstrate, is that her performance of "the good wife" amounts, for the viewer and reader, to a quote of a text that transmits an assurance of non-performative selfsameness on its behalf.

In acting out 'wifely' devotion and constancy to Syphax, in placing herself "für ihn in Ketten," in desiring "für ihn mir . . . zu erblassen," and in representing her "Opfer" not as death but as freedom ("Wenn deine blöde Magd/ die für dir säuftzend kniet / Und nach dem Tode girrt/ durch deine Faust sich siht / Durch keinen Römer falln;" ii, 345-47), Lohenstein's queen effectively likens—Butler would say "stylizes"—herself to the figure of the Christian martyr who willingly sacrifices herself for her belief in Christ. The reference pertains, however, not simply to the martyr in general. The eagerness with which Lohenstein's queen places the chains around her neck, and her linking of those chains to an anticipated freedom, immediately brings to mind Gryphius' *Catharina von Georgien*, whose text and heroine join these seemingly oppositional terms to one another precisely in order to figure her captivity and eventual murder at the hands of Chach Abas as an instance of martyrdom.⁷⁶ Sophonisbe is, of course, helped along in her efforts to present herself as Catharina by Masinissa, whose growing ardor for the African queen transforms him into Abas' double. Masinissa exclaims:

⁷⁶ See Andreas Gryphius, "Catharina von Georgien: Oder Bewehrete Beständigkeit," *Dramen*, ed. Eberhard Mannack (Frankfurt am Main: DKV, 1991) iv, 25; iv, 54-55; and iv, 61-65. Small Roman numerals indicate the act and Arabic numerals the verse number. Cf. also Barner, "Disponible Festlichkeit," 262-63.

Ach! aber Ach! bin ich Besigter oder Sieger?

...

... Und Sopohonisbe schlägt

In Band und Eisen mich! wir siegen! und sie trägt

Die Lorber=Kränze weg! wir schneiden/ und fühl'n Schmerzen!

Wir herrschen in der Burg/ sie aber uns im Herten!

Wir sind Herr dieses Reichs/ sie Hencker unser Lust!

(ii, 159-165)

Notice that Masinissa's diction strongly echoes that of Chach Abas's when the latter bemoans, for example, that: "Sie [sc. Catharina] herrscht in unser Burg/ der Kercker steht ihr offen" (i, 739), and that "Die [sc. Catharina] herrscht in dem [sc. Chach Abas] / der sie durchauß nicht versucht zu kräncken" (i, 788), or when he remarks in the following verses:

Gefangne die uns fing! die uns in Ketten schlägt!

...

... Wir haben zwar dein Land;

Doch hast du unser Hertz (Rach über Rach!) verbran't.

(ii, 51-56)

Exploiting this doubleness, Sophonisbe molds her second exchange with the general such that it replicates almost exactly the sexual and political power relations that hold between the captive, but patriotic and steadfastly devout Catharina and the lecherous invader Chach Abas, whose fate it is to be captivated by her.⁷⁷

Upon being confronted by the uncanny parallels between the story that Sophonisbe tells Masinissa and Gryphius' account of Catharina, it's important to remember that Sophonisbe's assertion of devotion and constancy to a spouse could have been staged in any number of different ways. This leads one to wonder: what particular

⁷⁷ The parallels to Gryphius' account of *Bewehrete Beständigkeit* are unmistakable when *Sophonisbe* is juxtaposed to *Epicharis* (1665, the same year *Agrippina* was written), Lohenstein's more strictly conventional take on the genre of the martyr drama. Nero doesn't throw Epicharis in prison and subject her to a martyr's death out of love or desire for her. He tears her body open in an attempt to extract from her a confession as well as the identity of her traitorous compatriots and information about their undertaking. Cf. Christopher Wild, *Theater der Keuschheit: Keuschheit des Theaters* (Freiburg i. Brsg: Rombach, 2003) 89-90.

effect is achieved with the choice of Catharina as a model? In two separate texts, Christopher Wild has analyzed the exemplarity of Catharina's constancy as resting on the oscillation "between word and image, text and body," and pointed to the fundamentally anti-theatrical nature of her chastity.⁷⁸ Bringing Wild's observations together as well as supplementing them, one might also characterize Catharina's exemplary constancy as being categorically anti-theatrical, though in a temporal rather than in the spectatorial sense that Wild means it with respect to chastity and virginity. For Catharina exemplifies the virtue of constancy only insofar as she remains un-dramatic, or ever-the-same; insofar as, staying true not only to Christ, but also to herself, she maintains her defiant stance against Abas over the course of the entire play. Wild himself hints at this fundamental quality of stasis in Gryphius' heroine when he remarks that Catharina is never really tempted by that which Abas offers her.⁷⁹ In terms both of plot and dramaturgical structure, it is therefore Catharina's refusal to budge from her position or change her person, it is her refusal, in other words, to engage with Abas and to *react* positively to his attempts "durch Zeit und Langmut und Geduld / Zu finden disen Schatz der unverfälschten Huld" (ii, 796-97) that drives the tyrant, at least in his own eyes, to take it upon himself *to act*—via the torture of her body—*for her*. This attempt to compel action from the altogether static Catharina turns out to be, as Abas acknowledges after her death, an *overreaction* on his part:

Jst Catharina Tod und Chach ist noch bey Leben!

...

Hat Chach / Princessin! sich / hat Chach sich so vergriffen?

Vnd sein selbst eigen Hertz durch deine Qual zurissen?

(v, 345-350)

⁷⁸ See Christopher Wild, "'Weder mit Worten noch ruten': The Force of Gryphius' Examples," *The Germanic Review* 76 (2001): 99-118, in particular 106, and *Theater der Keuschheit*, 124 sqq.

⁷⁹ See Wild, *Theater der Keuschheit*, 122-23.

If to quote is, as I've been suggesting, always to quote to some effect, Sophonisbe's "stylized repetition" of Catharina seeks precisely to have the Georgian queen issue a guarantee of *inaction*, or selfsameness over time, on her behalf. Lohenstein's mourning play makes this intention explicit when it has Sophonisbe brazenly employ the same strategy of *inaction*—as well as the familiar insistence upon the sanctity of marriage—to parry Masinissa's advances. But of course, Sophonisbe's performance of constancy and non-performance is a citation that turns the model of Gryphius' Catharina on its head. Where Catharina is tested and proven to be both constant and chaste only at the end of her play, only after all attempts to negotiate her release have proven futile, Sophonisbe's own performance, precisely because it is a deception, must begin with the testing and proof of her constancy to Syphax. It is only after she has demonstrated her constancy to her first husband that the negotiations between herself and Masinissa regarding her survival, and whether she will be delivered to the Romans can begin.

3.2.2.3 *An Alternative Reading of Sophonisbe's Appropriation of Syphax's Chains*

There is, however, an altogether different way to read Sophonisbe's second showdown with Masinissa. It rests upon the recognition that Lohenstein could have chosen to omit the device of Sophonisbe's confessional monologue at lines ii, 285-308, a monologue without which her *prior* action of freeing her husband and donning his chains would not only be, but also look to all the world like an instance of devotion and constancy—at least until the very moment when it becomes clear to us (some 135 lines later) as well as to her two husbands (toward the end of Act Three) that it isn't. The question we must therefore ask ourselves is why the text is concerned to grant us first-person insight into its

heroine's 'real' intentions. What does the queen's monologue tell us? Certainly, it introduces a self-incriminating gap between Sophonisbe's intention and her behavior. That gap is likely to widen when it's pointed out that toward the end of the rescue scene, directly prior to commencing her monologue, Sophonisbe takes her leave of Syphax with the following reassurance: "Geh' unerschrocken fort! es wird kein Mensch dich nicht / Rechtfertigen. Ja/ weil dein Mund gutt Römisch spricht / Wirst du dich auf den Fall wol zu verreden wissen" (ii, 281-283). The context and her use of "verreden" would seem to imply that deception already occupies her as she turns in the monologue to contemplate her own predicament. But the soliloquy also bridges the very gap that it introduces by allowing us to see Sophonisbe momentarily at a loss as to how to turn her self-induced confinement into an advantage, to witness her spontaneously hatch an unpremeditated plan before our very eyes, and to observe the extent to which she is deeply ambivalent about going through with her deceitful scheme:

Wie aber? schafft auch dis dir/ Sophonisbe/ Nutz?
 Die Ketten schwirrn umb mich; . . .
 . . .
 . . . Mein Syphax/ was fuer Rath?
 Wenn Masanissens Hand uns Liebes=Körner streute?
 Dörft' ich/ mein Engel dich/ wol setzen auf die Seite?
 Nein/ Sophonisbe/ nein! der Himmel straft und haßt
 Den Meineyd/ der bald dis/ bald jenes Bild umbfaßt!
 Wie würd' uns Syphax nicht verfluchen und verdammen?
 Ja würde Masaniß' uns mit sammt unsern Flammen
 Nach einst=gebüster Lust nicht als ein Gift verspein?
 Weil Laster nach der That uns selbst bald Eckel sein.
 Jedoch/ was widerstehn wir leitenden Gestirnen?
 Mein Syphax/ pflegen doch die Götter nicht zu zürnen:
 Daß heute man dis Bild/ ein anders morgen ehrt.
 Ja/ was ist/ das die Zeit uns nicht ersinnen lehrt?
 Der Witz mus aus der Noth ihm eine Tugend machen.
 (ii, 286-303)

By revealing that Sophonisbe would prefer to remain loyal to Syphax, but is compelled by the situation into which fate has delivered her to choose between loyalty to her husband and survival, her soliloquy mitigates and contextualizes the force of her intention to deceive. Indeed, it reveals that Sophonisbe's 'choice' is no choice at all. In doing so, it give us as readers the leeway to reevaluate our initial conclusion that the chains at the heart of Sophonisbe's performance of 'wifely' devotion constitute a simple disguise.

Recall that that conclusion seemed logical for two reasons: first, because Sophonisbe never moves to take the chains off, and, second, because of her stated intention to deploy the chains as the dead, stable, fixed sign of the loyalty with which she means to lure Masinissa into a love that she explicitly conceives of as a net.⁸⁰ But of the chains' *two* functions, this understanding of them as a straightforward prop that reveals the 'inner' character traits of loyalty will prove to be a secondary one. Sophonisbe doesn't actually rely on the fetters themselves to signify her wifely constancy to Masinissa. In their capacity as the externalized expression of marital devotion, the chains serve merely as the supporting evidence upon which the real signifying work—the performance that Sophonisbe goes on to give—rests. For once the queen has equated the chains around her neck with loyalty and constancy, once she has declared to Masinissa that it is these virtues which have led her to stand in front of him in the dungeon ("meine Treu schleust mich in diesen Fesseln ein," ii, 330), she never again mentions her shackles and ceases to treat them as the literal instrument of confinement that they are. That is: the chains no longer function merely as the sign of constancy with which she initially seeks

⁸⁰ For the etymological connection between "Garn" and "Netz" see the entry on "Garn" in Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch* (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1854-1960) vol. 4, 1367, 6c.

to draw Masinissa in. Rather, the lengths of chain are transmuted and incorporated into the very means of entrapment itself, becoming the constitutive element of what Sophonisbe earlier referred to as “Liebes-garn” (ii, 308) and which we interpreted as a love-net, and what now shows itself to be “cast” or “thrown” in the form of a tale of wifely love for Syphax and recounted at the enemy general’s behest.⁸¹ “Die Treue? Leg’ uns aus dein seltzam Ebentheuer,” Masinissa prompts Sophonisbe. His request—an elliptical query into how faithfulness and constancy might be construed as the signified of “Fesseln” that quickly becomes the wish to know more—doesn’t just confirm that Syphax’s chains by themselves were never going to be enough of a “disguise” to hoodwink him. It also marks the very moment in which Sophonisbe’s treatment of the (chains as) “Liebes-garn” shifts from a literal to a figurative one.

If the above reading of “Liebes-garn” as a textual narrative rather than a textile product necessarily brings to mind Roman Jakobson and Morris Halle’s observation that “[p]rose . . . is forwarded essentially by contiguity,”⁸² it’s important to recognize that Lohenstein’s drama has, precisely with the introduction of the verb “auslegen,” already begun to depict Sophonisbe’s narrative first and foremost as the performance, or doing, of an action. As will become clear, this sense of performance, or doing, differs slightly from the way I used it earlier to refer to Sophonisbe’s first speech to Masinissa, and from the way in which Butler uses the term in *Gender Trouble* and in the earlier essay

“Performative Acts and Gender Constitution.” Where my earlier use and those texts

⁸¹ See the etymological relation between “Netz,” “Garn,” “Gespinst,” and “Erzählung” as developed in the entry on “Gespinst” in Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch* (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1854-1960) vol. 4, 4156, 2b: “das abzuwickelnde garn,” figures as “der ‘faden’ der erzählung.” For the narrative implications of “Garn,” see also Karl Friedrich Wilhelm Wander, *Deutsches Sprichwörter-Lexicon: Ein Hausschatz für das deutsche Volk* (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1867) vol. 1, 1340-41, example 53 taken from Thomas Murner’s *Schelmensunft*: “Er spinnt gut Garn” in the sense of “Er redet allen Parteien zu Gefallen.”

⁸² Roman Jakobson and Morris Halle, *Fundamentals of Language* (Amsterdam: Mouton, 1956) 82.

contrast performance with the notion of a ‘self’ or ‘essence’ that must be expressed, here the term stands primarily opposed to the notion of a meaning that is posited. But as with her first speech, Sophonisbe’s narrative performance will amount neither to the telling of a sincere truth nor to an instance of deception and disguise.

In what ways might Sophonisbe’s narrative constitute the accomplishment of an act rather than the positing of a meaning? It is such in the most basic sense that “to lay out,” or tell how she came to be locked up in Syphax’s stead is an action that must be carried out with the mouth.⁸³ Her narrative is also an act in the sense of what John Langshaw Austin, in his lectures on *How to Do Things with Words*, initially defines as a performative utterance: in which to speak about an action is not to describe or to report or to constate truly or falsely the doing of it, but to do or carry out that act at the very moment of speaking, and moreover, by means of the speech itself.⁸⁴ Austin originally links the performative to the use of certain verbs—to bet, to promise, to take someone in marriage, to give—that are characterized by an asymmetry between the first-person present indicative, active voice and its other persons, tenses, and voices, noting that the *first-person use* of such verbs explicitly carries out the act named by the verb while all other forms of it may be (mis)taken for descriptions.⁸⁵ He will, however, go on to

⁸³ Gérard Genette sets forth in the “Introduction” to his *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Cornell: Cornell UP, 1983) 25-26 that there are three different meanings of “narrative:” beyond the first two conventional notions of narrative as “narrative statement” and “succession of events,” narrative refers to “the event of someone recounting something: the act of narrating taken in itself.” For this performative understanding of narrative cf. also John Langshaw Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, ed. J. O. Urmson and Marina Sbisa, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1975) 92-93.

⁸⁴ Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 6, 7, 12. Precisely because Sophonisbe’s storytelling constitutes a performative, the circumstances surrounding her storytelling “must be right and go right” if she is to “happily” succeed in the execution of her tale. Sophonisbe frets about how to manage the potentially “infelicitous” circumstances—whether or not she can convincingly tell such a story, whether or not Syphax and Masinissa will listen and believe her story, the conventional procedure of telling stories—that might result in a narrative “misfire” in the monologue she gives at lines ii, 295-299. See Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, Lecture II and passim.

⁸⁵ Austin, *How To Do Things with Words*, 5-8 and 60-62.

acknowledge the existence of historically primary, or implicit performatives: uses of language that lack the unambiguousness of the first-person pronoun verb pairing, but which must because of grammatical, vocabulary, or contextual indications nonetheless be understood as neither true nor untrue statements, but rather as the active accomplishment of an action by the speaker.⁸⁶

What makes Sophonisbe's narrative a compelling instance of an explicit performative is that the events, actions, and statements of plot that the queen linguistically and bodily⁸⁷ enacts also happen to relate to her as the story's heroine. That her story constitutes a first-person narrative, that she is both its narrator and its heroine means that her narrative explicitly points to her as the speaker-performer of the action. Though the first-person form of the verb corresponding to that action remains implicit, or elided, for much of the narrative, this omission proves only to be a drawn-out delay tactic—both in a rhetorical and an erotic sense—which she employs to increase Masinissa's desire for her. Sophonisbe goes on to conclude her narrative with the following announcement:

Ich darf/ mein Schutz=Gott/ dir nun nicht mehr widersprechen.
Die Flamme läßt in mir sich länger nicht verhöhln.
Laß einen heissen Kuß den todten Mund beseeln.
Denn Küssen ist der Kern/ die Seele ja der Liebe.
Itzt folgt nach Thränen Lust/ und Sonnenschein aufs Trübe.
Ich bin aus mir entzückt/ ersäuft von Glück und Lust!
Ich opfere mein Hertz und wiedme meine Brust
Zum Tempel.

(ii, 420-427; emphasis mine, A.N.)

⁸⁶ Austin, *How To Do Things with Words*, 57 sqq., 70 sqq. Austin's examples for such inexplicit performatives include: 'You are hereby authorized to pay . . .', 'Shut it, do,' 'Shut it—I should,' 'Shut it, if you like,' 'It's going to charge [--watch out!'].

⁸⁷ See footnote 86 of this chapter.

Given her emphatic use of two explicit performatives—a pair of commissives that bind her body and her soul to Masinissa—the whole of her narrative starts to read as a lengthily deferred seduction:⁸⁸ as the performative offering up of herself to the general. Whether or not she truly loves Masinissa—and the implication is that she doesn’t—the text’s depiction of her narrative as a performative utterance means that she cannot logically be said to be lying, cannot logically be condemned for deception. Neither, however, can she be said to be telling the truth about her feelings for him. These categories have no hold on Sophonisbe’s story because they necessarily impute a representational or referential function to language, a function that her words, do not, as a performative, carry out. Writing about Austin and Moliere’s *Don Juan*, Shoshana Felman has highlighted the self-contained, or self-referential, way in which explicit performatives reference, or name, an action in language which is simultaneously also carried out by language. Because the explicit performatives employed by Don Juan in his seductions bypass the world altogether, Felman argues that Don Juan cannot be said to lie, even though he has no intention of keeping his word to the men and women whom he

⁸⁸ Given that the intent of Sophonisbe’s storytelling is a seduction that proceeds by giving assurances of ‘wifely,’ *marital* devotion, and constancy to her first husband, my assertion that her storytelling is a performative raises questions that have been addressed by Shoshana Felman in *The Scandal of the Speaking Body: Don Juan with J. L. Austin, or Seduction in Two Languages* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2003). In a reading that brings J. L. Austin’s speech act theory into constellation with Molière’s *Don Juan*, Felman argues that Don Juan thematizes the relation between the three meanings of the words “act” and “performance:” the erotic meaning, the theatrical meaning, and the linguistic one. For Felman, all of these meanings implicate the speaking body. *Don Juan*, according to Felman, posits human action as the relation of the sexual act to the speech act, and the relation of the speech act to the theatrical act (15-16 and 41-42). Felman goes on to demonstrate that Austin’s *How to Do Things with Words* employs a rhetoric of seduction, that his teaching seeks to inspire desire and pleasure, and that his elucidation of the speech act draws upon language that evokes the performance of the sexual act.

seduces.⁸⁹ Felman might just as well have been speaking of Sophonisbe's narrative commissive to Masinissa.

I shall soon return to the analysis of Sophonisbe's narrative, but it will help our discussion of that text to stay for the moment with Austin's discussion of performatives. In Lecture VII of *How to Do Things with Words*, having failed to isolate definitive criteria, grammatical or otherwise, for recognizing the performative and distinguishing it from constatives, Austin posits the need for a more "general theory of speech acts." This general theory supplements the original, "abstract," and rigidly "ideal[ized]" distinction between constatives and performatives by re-conceiving and locating it within a single, total speech act: as the distinction between the locutionary act and the illocutionary act. The locutionary act is the uttering of a sentence with a particular sense and a particular reference: i.e. it is the production of meaning.⁹⁰ The illocutionary act is the locution considered within the context or "total situation" in which it occurs, *and what's more, with respect to the intention and purpose, or force, with which the locution is delivered.*⁹¹ It is in relation to the illocutionary force exerted upon them, whether that force is explicitly acknowledged by the speaker or elided from the utterance, that all locutions—including apparently referential or constative ones such as statements, descriptions, and reports—become the completion of a speech act that cannot be deemed either true or false, but only "happily [or unhappily] brought off," "felicitous" or "infelicitous."⁹² It's important to note that Austin doesn't just mean that the "performative opening"—the "I

⁸⁹ See Felman, *The Scandal of the Speaking Body*, 17-18. This self-referential quality is implicit in Austin's original characterization of an explicit performative (8). For Austin's take on promises made in "bad faith," see *How to Do Things with Words*, 9-11.

⁹⁰ Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 90, 109.

⁹¹ Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 98-100.

⁹² Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, Lecture XI.

promise,” “I state,” “I attest,” “I declare,” “I testify”—escapes the hold of truth and falsehood. His claim is that all utterances, even constatives, the statement itself—that thing which has been stated—cannot definitively be declared either true or false, since its truth or falsity cannot be straightforwardly determined in isolation from the *specific, expositive* force of its delivery.⁹³ For Austin, to acknowledge the application of an illocutionary force, *generally* understood, to a sentence is already to acknowledge the application of a particular kind of illocutionary force.

Austin’s general theory of speech acts has been vastly influential, and much has been written on it. As I make my own way through his text, I find that I am able to follow most of the moves he makes in order to set out his doctrine of illocution. Where I have difficulty, however, is with this last claim above, which strikes me as rather forced. Consider that all of the examples which Austin brings in support of the assertion that *the statement itself* cannot be a truth claim turn on cases that have to do with the difference between general and specialized knowledge: ‘France is hexagonal’ asserted by a top-ranked general as opposed to a geographer; the assertion that ‘Lord Raglan won the battle of Alma’ made in a school textbook as opposed to a scholarly paper. My objection is not directed against Austin’s insistence that utterances must be evaluated with respect to the contexts in which they are spoken. But in many if not most everyday cases, cases in which context certainly must be considered to be fully understood, the speaker’s particular perspective, her specific intention, the precise kind of force with which she makes an observation, and to whom she makes it, turn out to have little bearing upon an assessment of the statement. Take Austin’s own example of statements such as ‘all snow

⁹³ Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 142 sqq. In addition to the force of exposition, there are four others: verdicts, orders and commands, commitments, and social attitudes and behaviors (151 sqq.).

geese migrate to Labrador,’ of which he asks whether it can be deemed true, “given that one maimed one sometimes fails when migrating to get quite the whole way.”⁹⁴ Against Austin, I would suggest that the truth or falsity of the statement may be sufficiently assessed with reference to the geese’s health, the weather conditions, etc., and need not proceed via a consideration of the speaker’s knowledge of these facts. Finally, consider Austin’s example of the person who asserts, before Australia has been discovered, that ‘[a]ll swans are white.’ Austin asks, “[i]f you later find a black swan in Australia, is X refuted? Is his statement false now?” Austin equivocates: “Not necessarily: he will take it back but he could say ‘*I wasn’t talking about swans absolutely everywhere; for example, I was not making a statement about possible swans on Mars*’” (emphasis mine, A.N.). Here one might point out that in many situations—an exam, a news program, an ornithology lecture, or a conversation between two bird enthusiasts—what counts as the relevant context for an assessment of this statement is when it is said and the discovery of Australia and black swans, but not necessarily the particular perspective or voice of the person who asserted it, though that person certainly remains the factor by means of which the statement can be situated within a particular time and place. Let me be clear: I am not proposing that these statements about snow geese and white swans have the status of timeless, un-embodied mathematical propositions. I am merely saying that, contrary to what Austin seems to assume, we very often and legitimately assess statements without regard to the particular force with which the speaker delivers them.

Where the speaker’s intention and purpose do matter, in Austin’s example of the swans, is when we want to assess the situation and the statement with regard to the speaker herself and her views: when for instance, we attempt to determine if the speaker

⁹⁴ Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 144. The following example can also be found here.

is colorblind, or if she can recognize a swan when she sees one, or how she perceives swans, or what she imagines them to look like. I want to suggest that it is precisely in such dialogic instances in which what is at stake is, or is relevant to, or dependent upon the speaker's particular perception of the things and events in the world—including, of course, self-perception—that attention must be paid to the specific, expositive force with which constatives such as statements and assertions are delivered. But it is only in this more narrowly defined dialogic situation that apparently constative statements, assertions, or declarations cannot logically be deemed either true or untrue. It is only in this more narrowly defined dialogic situation that they can be seen to forfeit their referential status. To see why this is, let us take up once again the example of Sophonisbe's narrative tale.

It is, I think, clear that Sophonisbe's story, quite aside from the explicit performatives contained within it, constitutes an act in this, for us, third sense of the term that Austin lays out. Though Sophonisbe does not, in telling her story, directly delineate her intention or purpose, though she does not explicitly say how she means for her referential statement to be taken, it is clear from the context that she intends for it to have the force of an explanation or a clarification. In recounting her story, Sophonisbe provides Masinissa not only with an *account of* but also with an *account for* how she came to replace her husband in his cell.⁹⁵ As the former, her story is merely referential insofar as it strings together a series of statements in order to relate, describe, and report various actions, events, and states of affairs, either true or false. As the latter, it is a linguistic utterance that undertakes to do something, to accomplish a certain kind of

⁹⁵ On the difficulties of 'giving an account of oneself,' see Judith Butler, *Giving an Account of Oneself* (New York: Fordham UP, 2005) 36-37 and *passim*.

work, to intervene, as it were, in the world. In telling her story, Sophonisbe seeks, more particularly, to testify on behalf of herself, to give evidence of her enduring wifely virtue, and to assert ownership for the heroic actions she describes.⁹⁶ In telling her story, she hopes to act directly upon her opponent Masinissa, crafting his perception of her and thus the outcome of the situation in which he and she find themselves. This exertion of what Austin classifies as an expository force on her narrative means that her storytelling lies beyond the reach of truth and falsehood. But as I argued above, that application of force by itself fails to make the narrative statement so. What ultimately renders Sophonisbe's statement untenable as a truth claim, and enables *us* to absolve her of committing a deception even though she does not intend to remain true to Syphax, is Masinissa's interest *in her* and in assessing the events that have taken place in his absence as well as the situation in which he finds himself in the dungeon *with regard to her*. "Ließ mein Manastabel Sie in den Kercker schlüssen?" he asks her. And we know that, upon hearing her reply that it was not Manastabel but her "Treue" that brought her to the dungeon, he follows up with an invitation to her to "leg' uns aus dein seltzam Ebentheuer." Without this interest, the particular, *expositive* force with which Sophonisbe delivers her narrative would remain an unspecific or general illocutionary force, since it could not legitimately be factored into the contextual analysis of her statement with regard to the events it names. In the face of this interest, the expository force of her delivery *must* be factored into that analysis. But doing so, as Austin correctly recognized, is to acknowledge that the apparently referential narrative statement that Sophonisbe utters does not stand on its

⁹⁶ Cf. Austin, *How To Do Things with Words*, 161-62; J. Hillis Miller, *Speech Acts in Literature* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1999) muses upon the way in which telling and writing stories, or more broadly literature, not only constitute acts of taking responsibility, but will themselves be the occasions that necessitate the taking of responsibility for that which one says and writes (9-11).

own. It is to acknowledge that the statement does not reference the events it describes directly, but only as the perceptual viewpoint of an individual language user:

Sophonisbe's. As such, the act of stating or accounting for herself amounts, at the moment in which it takes place, neither to the telling of the truth nor of an untruth. Put differently: though she insists upon her loyalty to Syphax at the very moment in which she attempts to seduce Masinissa, Sophonisbe cannot *at that moment* be understood to be deceiving either men. This is because the language of the statement she makes merely points to itself as *her* language, as *her* descriptive act of the world.⁹⁷ By presenting itself as an effect of her perception of the world rather than a reflection of it, her statement shields itself from all charges that it seeks to represent that world falsely. Despite, or perhaps because of, its "self-referentiality" as an expositive speech act and its slightly different "self-referentiality" as an explicit performative, Sophonisbe's narrative statement to Masinissa does not remain without effect.⁹⁸ With his response to her storytelling, Masinissa reminds us precisely of this:

Durchlauchste Sophonisbe.
Machstu die Fabel wahr von der getreuen Thisbe?
O Demant=feste Treu! O Liebe/ die für ihr
Kein gleiches Beyspiel hat! die Tugend wigt in dir
Noch deine Schönheit weg.
...
Ich wil den Bund mit Rom/ eh als den Eyd [to protect her] dir brechen.
(ii, 347-351, 421; emphasis mine, A.N.)

⁹⁷ Outside of this moment in which Sophonisbe carries out her expositive speech act, she can of course be judged as either telling the truth or committing a deception. The reference point for such a determination would be what Sophonisbe will go on to do, whether, for example, she will remain true to Syphax or abandon him for Masinissa.

⁹⁸ For more on the way in which performatives, even ones intended to mislead, alter the reality that they do not in fact reference, see Felman, *The Scandal of the Speaking Body*, 50-55, 78, and 110-11. Felman's remarks hint at the way in which 'truth' itself often depends not on facts, so much as on acceptability, and the way in which lies can also affect the outcome of an event.

4 In Conclusion: On Cross-Dressing, Deception, and the Relation of the Dedicatory Poem to the Play

Extrapolating from Masinissa's statement, we can observe more generally that Sophonisbe has managed during her encounters with the general in Act Two to release the element of the performative that had been inherent in, but constrained to the formal ceremony of the religious sacrifice which she carried out with her stepson Vermina in Act One from its ritualized context. That is, in deploying her cross-dressed, manly appearance not as a disguise, but rather as the foil against which Masinissa might contrast her subsequent performances of 'femininity' and heterosexuality, and in successfully taking up Syphax's manacles and transmuting them into a promissory, first-person narrative about her loyalty, she has in both of her exchanges with the general succeeded in freeing the performance of gender and sexuality from the ritualized, scripted role-playing that in Act One enabled her cross-dressed appearance to be comprehended as performance—and *not* as a sign that expresses the sex of *her own 'body'*—in the first place.⁹⁹

But though we may find this striking link connecting Sophonisbe's last three instances of cross-dressing in Act Two back to the one in Act One convincing, we may still be left wondering the following two things. First, why in each of the three episodes from the second act, does one character always define or explicitly mention, in a tone of insistent disbelief, the concept of "Verstellung" in terms of the disjunction between what

⁹⁹ Cf. Barner, "Disponibile Festlichkeit," 263-64. Barner argues that the central interest of the text in the ceremony that Sophonisbe carries out with Vermina in Act One is its emphasis on religious sacrifice. Barner argues that Sophonisbe then goes on to make a series of sacrifices throughout the play in order to appease the fates. He would, I take it, also read her drag meetings with Masinissa as scenes of ritual sacrifice in which she offers up first herself and then her marriage to Syphax in an attempt to escape the indignity of being brought to Rome. For Barner, this emphasis on sacrifice throughout the play points to the religious origin of theater asserted by the preface.

sons are aware of the customs surrounding the sacrifice. And surely, Lohenstein doesn't expect even his seventeenth-century audience to believe that any of the characters present is worried that Vermina's action might come across as pretense, and that, as such, it might stain his reputation. Why, then, does the play go out of its way to literally insert the

presence of both men and women for the performance of certain rites. . . . The onstage exchange of clothing called for in the play thus seems to have been designed to authenticate the representation of the Numidians as other, barbaric, and pagan, both in their politics and their rites. The scene culminates in what must have been an oddly exciting, yet terrifying dramaturgic ratification of this accuracy for the young actors . . . The interest of the notes in the scene's "authenticity" is underscored by [this] excessive stage action. The *apparent illogic* of the necessity to cross-dress in fact only causes it to stand out even more, however, since, in terms of the protocols of priestly attire that the queen—and the notes—describe, Vermina and Sophonisbe could have maintained sartorial identities appropriate to their "original" biological sex and still fulfilled *the requirements for simultaneous male and female presence* at the rites. Why the emphasis here on the *surface* exchange of their gender identities in the midst of a scene already so bizarre as to make the moment of transvestism *almost superfluous*?" (48-49; emphasis mine, A.N.) I disagree both with Newman's translation and her conclusions about the passage and Lohenstein's notes. I would rather translate "einerley" with the word "whole," or "one" or even "unity" and hold that the phrase "beyde . . . gewesen sey" refers to the hermaphroditic presence of both male and female primary sexual characteristics within *a single individual*. That is, Lohenstein's sources show that the Ancients acknowledged Venus as the goddess of love by calling for men and women to exchange their clothing, and thereby to become *at once* both male and female. I speculate, moreover, that with this, Lohenstein and his sources are referencing the fact that Venus is said to assimilate and modulate the male, thereby joining the two sexes together. Also relevant here is the fact that, following her liaison with Hermes (the Roman god Mercury), Venus' Greek counterpart Aphrodite gave birth to Hermaphroditus, who through his possession of both masculine and feminine traits, came to symbolize the union of man and wife and to be associated with the institution of marriage. Significant here is also that the cross-dressed participants of ritual celebrations honoring the epicene Aphroditus, who is often described as an earlier iteration of Hermaphroditus and identified with the moon. See for example Ariadne Staples, *From Good Goddess to Vestal Virgins: Sex and Category in Roman Religion* (New York: Routledge, 1998) 16 and Chapter Three on "Venus," particularly 149-150; the entry for "Hermaphroditus" in *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*, ed. William Smith et al. (London: J. Murray, 1901) vol. 1, 956-957; and Vern L. Bullough and Bonnie Bullough, *Cross Dressing, Sex, and Gender* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1993) 29. Given this hermaphroditic tradition and what Spellerberg and Newman herself have shown to be the fiction of the entire scene of the first religious sacrifice, I would counter that what's curious about Lohenstein's play is not that it renders this moment of cross-dressing "illogical" and "superfluous." Additionally, one might ask what a 'deep' "exchange of gender identities" would look like.

Newman's description of this initial depiction of cross-dressing in Act One as unnecessary lays the groundwork for her subsequent interpretation of the difference between Lohenstein's play and its historical sources—namely, Livy's *History of Rome* and Appian's *Punic Wars*—for the story of Sophonisbe, sources which, far from placing the queen in drag at the moment of her encounter with Masinissa, describe her as being impressed by the latter's armor and military accoutrements (52-54). We have seen that Newman goes on to argue that Sophonisbe's tendency to cross-dress points to a fundamental split in her character. Building upon Luce Irigaray's description of female sexuality as "not one," but at least double and indeed plural (39), Newman, you will recall, argues that the Numidian queen's identity is "ideologically split" with regard to gender, nationality, and culture. She is at one and the same time and therefore conflictingly both "a female character dressed as a man, but also . . . in her display of virtue, an erotically powerful and hence feminized "passionate" African, who is nevertheless capable of acting in a courageous, nearly Roman fashion to preserve the honor of her house and line (50)." The non-oneness, or hybridity, of Sophonisbe's character corresponds, according to Newman, to the non-oneness, or hybridity of Lohenstein's play (47 and 55 sqq.).

issue of pretense into the middle of this scene of ceremony and cross-dressing? Why does it insist on folding the depiction of cross-dressing, with its explicit challenge to a binary understanding of sex and gender,¹⁰¹ onto an unprompted denial that such acts always constitute and may count as disguise and deception as they relate to the characters' affects, motives, and intentions?

The solution to both of these questions lies in recognizing that the play bearing Sophonisbe's name deploys her gratuitous explanation to her sons to address the charge leveled at her by the dedicatory preface. That charge extends beyond the accusation, successfully rebutted by Sophonisbe herself in Act One and by our analyses of her two speeches to Masinissa in Act Two, that cross-dressing necessarily amounts to an instance of disguise and deception. That charge amounts to the more insidious suggestion, made via the very structure of the preface itself, that cross-dressing can be taken as an indication that the cross-dresser inclines to further acts of deception.

The dedicatory poem to Sophonisbe offers a meditation on the way in which man, like nature in all of her aspects and elements, is inscribed in the cosmological principle of creation as changeful play. For Lohenstein, that inscription means that man occupies both object and subject positions.¹⁰² He is the one creation of changeful play who becomes a consummate player himself, playing from birth to death and in all aspects of life.

¹⁰¹ See Marjorie Garber, *Vested Interests: Cross-Dressing and Cultural Anxiety* (New York: Routledge, 1992) 10-13. The importance of Garber's contribution, which first appeared in print two years after Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble*, and its relevance to Lohenstein's *Sophonisbe* is the breadth of its scope. Though her book doesn't touch upon German seventeenth-century drama, the cumulative force of her examples and analyses of cross-dressing is to demonstrate the sheer fallacy of believing that biological sex may be fully described using a 'natural' binary structure. Garber observes that the tendency of many feminist critics and gender theorists is "to look through rather than *at* the cross-dresser," employing their purported subject to critique extant distributions of gender attributes, before then "subsuming that figure within one of the two traditional genders." Her own frontal analysis conceptualizes cross-dressing as a third term: one that repeatedly blurs, upsets, and ultimately questions the comfortably binary categories of 'male' and 'female,' whether these terms are used on the level of gender or biological sex.

¹⁰² The following outline of Lohenstein's mediation stays close to that text, but is also indebted to Barner's remarks in "Disponibile Festlichkeit," 265-266 and *Barockrhetorik*.

Lohenstein writes: “Für allen ist aber der Mensch ein Spiel der Zeit. Das Glücke spielt mit ihm / und er mit allen Sachen.”¹⁰³ Initially innocent and involving toys such as “ein hölzern Pferd” (79), “die Küglichen/ geseiffte Wasser=Blasen” (86) and somewhat later “Kegel/ Karte/ Brett und Würffel” (97), that play ultimately includes religious ceremonies, athletic and gladiatorial games, and as an extension of such rites and games, the theater of Euripides, Sophocles, Aristophanes and of course Lohenstein himself. But human play, the meditation suggests, also encompasses a more serious, strategic “theater” that can take one of two forms. In the first, that of prudent dissemblance (“Verstellung”) embodied for example by the preface’s addressee Nesselrode, it constitutes the acceptable means of individual advancement and self-preservation in the face not only of change, luck, and time but also of other men. Consider the following two passages:

Die Weißheit bildet sich nicht stets auf einen Schlag;
 Ja Tugend muß oft selbst nur in der Larve gelten.
 Wer Schertz und Ernst vermischt/ und mit der Klugheit spielt/
 Hat oftermals zu erst den rechten Zweck erzielt. (21-24)

Wer niemals thöricht spielt/ die Klugheit oft verstellt/
 Aus Thorheit Vorthail macht/ ist Meister in der Welt. (107-108)

In its second iteration, that of semblance and affective simulation exemplified, for instance, by Sophonisbe and Masinissa, it marks the loss of reason and the perversion of a mind in which the affects ragingly play:

Was für ein blindes Spiel fängt aber mit uns an
 Der Jugend erster Trieb/ ihr wallendes Geblütte?
 Die Lust/ die man mit Fug auch Marter nennen kan/
 Verrücket die Vernunft/ verstellte das Gemütte.
 Man stellt kein Schauspiel auf/ daß nicht die Raserey
 Der Liebe Meisterin im gantzen Spiele sey. (109-114)

¹⁰³ Daniel Casper von Lohenstein, “Widmungsgedicht” to *Sophonisbe* in *Sämtliche Werke: Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, ed. Lothar Mundt, Wolfgang Neuber, and Thomas Rahn (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2013) section ii, vol. 3.1, 73. In the following, references to the “Widmungsgedicht” are given in the body of the text by indicating the verse number.

The preface proceeds to catalog the many ways in which “sich der Mensch verstellt / Unmenschliche Begierd’ und wilde Regung fühlet? / Furcht/ Hofnung/ Freude/ Zorn für schöne Larven hält” (205-207). Atop that list, it places the world of the court, or “Hof,” and its inhabitants as the foremost practitioners of illusion and deception (175-186).

But the very first instance of human treachery and deception—the one that gets the list going to begin with¹⁰⁴—is introduced into the poem not simply with the person of Sophonisbe, but more specifically and significantly, directly after the reference to her first cross-dressed appearance with Vermina. That appearance is, however, only definitively revealed to be an act of transvestite disguise at line 132: “Weil keines unvermummt sein Spiel vollenden kan.” It is initially described in terms that do not entirely close off the possibility that the woman who casts aside her motherhood and intends to set her own son on fire is not now involved in an operation of transsexuality: “Sie zeucht die Mutter aus das Glücksspiel zu verdrehn / Und wil ihr eigen Kind auf glimmen Rösten braten; Vermina wird ein Weib / sie ein geharnschter Mann” (129-131). The implication of these details, which are presented as linked to one another, is that such a person is naturally unnatural—or necessarily deceptive. For if nature, or biology, is taken to constitute something like a fundamental truth, then cross-dressing, which challenges the premises of ‘biology,’ is not just an instance of disguise and deception. It is the manifestation of a deceptive disposition. As such, transvestism functions as an indicator for additional acts of deceptive simulation—acts such as those committed by Sophonisbe and Masinissa:

Die für dem Ehmann itzt aus Liebe sterben wil/

¹⁰⁴ As will become clear by the end of this paragraph, I am referring here to lines 133-138 of the dedicatory poem.

Hat in zwey Stunden sein' und ihrer Hold vergessen.
 Und Masanissens Brunst ist nur ein Gauckelspiel/
 Wenn er der/ die er früh für Liebe meint zu fressen/
 Den Abend tödtlich Gift als ein Geschencke schickt /
 Und/ der erst Buhler war /als Hencker sie erdrückt. (133-38)

It is not by chance that this summary of their pretenses—i.e., of behavior that directly contradicts an earlier statement that appeared to be binding in the way that nature or biology seem to be binding—begins at line 133.¹⁰⁵

In response to this second charge of a disposition to deception, the play adopts a strategy of parodic replication. That is, it appropriates the preface's claim by restating it at a key moment within each of the scenes of cross-dressing in Act Two. Indeed, we identified this key moment when we wondered earlier why the play belatedly tags all three of those scenes with the concept of disguise and/or deception. For it is directly after Sophonisbe has just exposed herself and her 'female' identity to Masinissa and Syphax that the men each go on to re-voice the preface's assertion that cross-dressing may be taken to signify a general inclination to deceive. You will recall that, ignoring Sophonisbe's disclosure entirely and echoing the dedicatory poem exactly, the two men persist in trying to understand her drag appearance as an instance of 'Verstellung' understood as the act of literally becoming the opposite sex. But what marks their

¹⁰⁵ In *Verhängnis und Geschichte*, Gerhard Spellerberg also makes the point that the preface condemns Sophonisbe for these acts that contradict the 'natural' order of things (137). I am aware that critics such as Elizabeth Krimmer regard the seventeenth century to be more tolerant of cross-dressing and other subversions of gender identity. In her book *In the Company of Men*, Krimmer argues that the shift toward strictly defined heteronormativity comes about in the course of the eighteenth century. I would argue that the preface to *Sophonisbe* works to qualify Krimmer's thesis, though by no means does Lohenstein's poem disqualify her insight. Jane O. Newman notes that while the early modern era scrupulously delineated the limits of acceptable gender behavior for both sexes, it was also preoccupied with figures who transgressed these limits (*The Intervention of Philology*, 83-86). These figures of transgression, however, do not necessarily operate 'outside' of the system. Consider, for instance, male actors who took on female roles or the 'castrati.' While these 'men' certainly undermined the binary logic of the gender system, they also instantiated an entirely new set of gender expectations. Rather than subverting fixed gender identities, such sexually ambiguous figures added, as it were, another essentialized notion of gender to the categories of 'male' and 'female.'

reactions as a parody of the introductory text's claim is that their terms and logic now make up part of an almost comic exchange in which the men appear by turns slow-witted and dumbfounded. Masinissa is literally the later when the armored Sophonisbe refers to herself as a maidservant in their first run-in. Failing utterly to process her disclosure, he manages only to utter a sole question, in which he repeats what she has just told him, adding only a description of that which he sees in front of him: namely, a helmet and armor (ii, 78). His single verse paraphrase of cross-dressing stands in stark and disadvantageous contrast to the torrent of language that Sophonisbe unleashes upon him in response.¹⁰⁶ Syphax fares only somewhat better when he meets his wife in Roman military garb in the dungeon. After likening the experience of being confronted by cross-dressing to a dream in which a ghost taunts him—"Höhnt ein Gespenste dich? . . . Kommt Sophonisbens Geist hieher?" (ii, 254-256)—he asks his wife if she has not been transformed ("ist . . . worden") into "ein Römisch Kriegsknecht." Sophonisbe's sober request that he look past her disguised appearance—"Schau: in was Treu und Noth sich nicht *vermummen* kan! (ii, 258; emphasis mine; A.N.)—suggests that Syphax delivers the question in earnest at the same time that it presents him as dense. That slow-wittedness is the take-away—and that the men's statements work in combination with one another to cement the parodic effect of these passages—seems all but clear by the time we witness Masinissa's reaction to Sophonisbe's third gender bending turn as Syphax. For indeed, the general's response differs from that of his rival's only in the intensity of his confusion and the histrionics that accompany it: whereas Syphax believes himself to be dreaming, Masinissa both dreams and questions his own reason; where Syphax asks his wife

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Schöne, *Emblematik und Drama*, 151-152. Schöne observes that where two characters with contrasting positions meet on the seventeenth-century German stage in "a duel of stichomythia," he or she "who falls silent loses. Whoever has the last word, wins."

whether she has become a Roman mercenary, Masinissa asks her if Syphax has not transformed himself (“hat . . . sich . . . verstellt”) into a woman before going on to declare the event “ein Wunder=Werck.” To all of this, as well as to his disbelieving histrionic exclamations—“Hilf Himmel! Ich erstarr!”, “Ihr Götter!”, “Ist Sophonisbe dis? ist Syphax nicht mehr hier?”—Sophonisbe calmly replies: “Sie ist es / grosser Fürst / Sie kniet für Masanissen” (ii, 322, 325-327), before going on to deluge him with yet another flood of words: namely, her “Liebes-garn.”

Implicit in the above reading is an understanding of the preface and its claim as constituting the original text, and the play as a copy that employs the techniques of imitation, humor, and exaggeration to parody, or subvert, it. Now, the original is often understood in cases of parody to be temporally prior to the copy. But temporal difference is not a prerequisite of parody. Indeed, in the case of *Sophonisbe*, such a temporal priority vis-à-vis the play can be neither definitively denied nor attributed to the preface. I want to suggest, however, that a relation of parody pertains between the poem and the play conceived of as the two parts of a whole. Certainly, what we do know of the play’s transmission history supports such a reading: namely, one) that the earliest print edition of *Sophonisbe*, published in 1680, includes the introductory poem that refers to the play itself as an “Opfer;” and two) that the plot of that first edition largely resembles the version of the play performed in May 1669 at the Magdalenen-Gymnasium in Breslau.¹⁰⁷ Such an interpretation does, however, run counter to much of the criticism on Lohenstein’s treatment of pretense and prudence in *Sophonisbe*. For, as I’ve noted earlier, the critical understanding of these topics is grounded in an assumption that Lohenstein’s opening statement about man as theatrical player and pretender is *programmatisch*, or

¹⁰⁷ See footnote 18 of this chapter.

directional, with respect to the play itself. But if I'm correct about the parodic intent of the scenes of cross-dressing in Act Two, then it would be important to read the poem with, but perhaps also against, those depictions of sartorial exchange. Such a structural modification in our comprehension of what counts as the text of the play would require us to modulate our conception what Lohenstein says about pretense and prudence. For what Sophonisbe's acts of cross-dressing in Act Two ultimately demonstrate is that within a secular, politicized version of the *theatrum mundi*, where only the convincing performance matters, disguise and deception have a much more limited applicability than the dedicatory preface would on first reading seem to intimate.

Chapter Three: Pictures, Frames, and Architecture in Goethe's Wahlverwandtschaften

I A Room with a View: What Eduard Sees from the Moss Hut

Having just heard the gardener's description of the view from the newly finished moss hut, Eduard, "ein . . . reich[er] Baron im besten Mannesalter," subsequently makes his way from the nursery through the grounds and up to that structure.¹ There his wife Charlotte seats him in such a way that he sees through the building's door and window(s) "die Landschaft," or landscape, that the gardener had a moment ago praised.²

The above sentences seem, at first, an accurate enough rendering of the first two pages of Goethe's 1809 novel *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*. Yet in its description of what Eduard sees out the hut's door and window(s), the account diverges distinctly from the narrator's version:

An der Thüre empfing Charlotte ihren Gemahl und ließ ihn dergestalt niedersitzen, daß er durch Thüre und Fenster die verschiedenen Bilder, welche die Landschaft gleichsam im Rahmen zeigten, auf einen Blick übersehen konnte.
(DW 8)

Notice that the direct object of the dependent clause is "die verschiedenen Bilder."

According to the narrator, then, that which Eduard sees from his seat is, curiously, not his own lands, not the park landscape through which he has just made his way, but pictures, or *representations*, of that landscape. Supporting this reading that what Eduard perceives is not strictly or simply the landscape itself is the relative clause "welche die Landschaft

¹ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*, ed. Joseph Kiermeier-Debre (München: dtv, 1999) 7-8. Hereinafter, I will cite this work in the body of the essay as *DW*.

² It is perhaps pedantic, but nonetheless important to note that the German text gives no clear indication as to whether the hut has only *one* or *multiple* windows. This fact is significant because the more windows there are, the less stark would be the contrast between the inside and the outside, or, put differently, the less pronounced would be any effect of framing. It is, against this background, perhaps no coincidence that Fritz Breithaupt in his analysis tacitly assumes that there is only a single window: "Das Fenster schneidet die Landschaft als Passepartout aus . . ." By implying that there is only a single window, Breithaupt sets the stage for a reading that emphasizes the unity of "auf einen Blick," while neglecting, of course, the implied plurality of "die verschiedenen Bilder." Cf. Fritz Breithaupt, *Jenseits der Bilder: Goethes Politik der Wahrnehmung* (Freiburg i. Brsg.: Rombach, 2000) 132; emphasis A.N.

gleichsam im Rahmen zeigten” that modifies “Bilder.” Syntactically, relative clauses provide additional information about the nouns they modify. Very often, this information is explanatory: without it, the sentence would be incomplete or incomprehensible. By describing the “pictures” in terms of that which they “showed” (zeigten), the above clause explicitly points to the pictorial nature of that which Eduard sees. For, as the philosopher-critic Stephan Mulhall, writing in the context of an analysis of Wittgenstein’s late philosophy about what a picture is—its function, the role or purpose it has in our lives—puts it: “a picture just is the kind of thing that is correctly described by describing what it represents.”³ To put it more pointedly, pictures do not exist as stand-alone objects, meaningful in and of themselves. Rather, their significance in our lives, at least traditionally,⁴ derives primarily from that which they represent or portray.

For most readers, the narrator’s peculiar assertion that what Eduard perceives is pictures poses neither an interpretive nor an epistemological problem about our ability to know the outside world: this is because they instinctively assume that the narrator must be referring to an experience that most of us have probably had at one time or other. Perhaps we were reading or talking to someone, when we happened to look up and across the room to the window. It was then that we would have noticed that the window framed the exterior viewed through it in such a way that that exterior comes to resemble a painting or picture. Applying the logic of this experience to the text of the *Wahlverwandtschaften*, we assume that the narrator refers to what Eduard sees as

³ See Stephen Mulhall, *On Being in the World: Wittgenstein and Heidegger on Seeing Aspects* (London: Routledge, 1990) 23.

⁴ This statement does not, of course, apply to abstract, nonfigurative, nonobjective, and nonrepresentational art—from futurism to cubism to Jackson Pollock’s drip painting—in which the objective is precisely to create forms and images that exist with a measure of independence from objects and references in the world.

“pictures” because the frames of the door and window(s) present the landscape beyond them as a *veduta*. Such an interpretation aligns the moss hut passage with an entire sub-category of European graphic and pictorial art and architecture, one that—from the niche-figures of late-medieval sacred and secular architecture to Goya and Rembrandt’s “Wom[e]n in the Window” paintings to fifteenth- and sixteenth-century depictions of people in intimate interior spaces in which the exterior landscape is visible in an increasingly prominently placed window—explores the cultural practice by which frames are used to set pictures off from their surroundings, and thereby to mark them as representations worthy of contemplation.⁵

The moss hut passage does put the reader in mind of the cultural practice by which frames are used to set representations off from reality. Nonetheless, I want to suggest that the real interest of the passage lies elsewhere. The account of Eduard’s optical experience that, in the first instance, seems so clearly to refer to a *veduta* produced by the frames of the door and windows, can also be read as describing a fundamental condition of our visual perception. Yes, Eduard sees the landscape through the *superimposed* frames of the door and window(s); but that is not the only reason why the narrator refers to what he sees as “pictures.” And yes, the “pictures” that Eduard sees happen to coincide with Charlotte’s introduction of the frames of the door and window(s) into his line of sight and onto the exterior landscape. However, the case can be made that

⁵ For more on this cultural practice, including its implications for the relation of the interior to the exterior as well as for imagination and safety, see Kyra Stromberg, “Das Fenster im Bild – Das Bild im Fenster,” *Daidalos Berlin Architectural Journal* 13 (1984): 54-64, here: 54-55. For a history of the material picture frame in literature, painting, and film from the eighteenth century to twenty-first centuries, see also Martina Wagner-Egelhaaf, “Rahmen-Geschichten: Ansichten eines kulturellen Dispositivs,” *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte* 82 (2008): 112-148. Wagner-Egelhaaf conceives of frames as dispositives in the Foucauldian sense. This allows her to understand ‘frame’ both in a “material-technical” and a “cognitive-metaphorical” sense, and thus to read frames not merely as a motif, but as the necessary condition for the generation of meaning (cf. 114 sq.).

the baron always already sees the landscape enclosed, as it were, within a frame, and that the window picture that Charlotte ‘creates’ for him is, in a much more fundamental way, already a ‘picture.’ To see this, we need to disregard for the moment our own visual experiences and cultural practices, and look again at the relative clause that modifies “pictures” as it stands on the page: “. . . die Bilder, welche die Landschaft gleichsam im Rahmen zeigten.” The clause clearly characterizes the pictures as being *co-emergent* with the framed landscape. Put another way: the frame, like the landscape, is described as being *internal to* and *fully contained within* the representational space of the pictures that Eduard sees.⁶

⁶ Critics have often directed attention to the moss hut passage. And while they have been clear that what Eduard sees from his seat there is not unmediated reality, not the landscape itself, they have, I believe, failed to characterize correctly what he does see. In Chapter Four of *Jenseits der Bilder*, Fritz Breithaupt suggests that the beginning pages of Goethe’s novel introduce Eduard to the reader as a man who relates to his surroundings in terms of possession. The preferred organ for acquiring things in the *Wahlverwandtschaften*, Breithaupt argues, is the eye, and Eduard’s eyes are the hands with which he takes possession of that upon which his gaze falls. A case in point for Breithaupt is the novel’s opening passage about Eduard’s view out of the moss hut: “In der Berghütte angelangt wird Eduard mit einem Mal durch Charlotte die ferne Landschaft nahegebracht. . . . Das Fenster schneidet die Landschaft als Passepartout aus, so daß Eduard sie sich als begrenztes Bild zueignen kann, nicht weil sie tatsächlich nah und greifbar ist wie die anderen Gegenstände seines Besitzes, sondern weil er sie im Rahmen ‘auf einen Blick übersehen’ kann, als wäre sie nah. Das tendenziell Unendliche wird erst als Begrenztes und Endliches zum Gegenstand der Sicht. . . . *Der Rahmen produziert ein Bild*, in dem die Unüberschaubarkeit der Landschaft als Gebilde ausgelegt ist, welches Eduards greifendem Blick faßbar ist” (133; emphasis mine, A.N.). Insofar as Breithaupt suggests that what Eduard sees is not the landscape itself, but a picture of the landscape, he seems to be in agreement with the narrator. And yet, what Breithaupt means by “picture” turns out to be quite different from what the narrator means. For while the latter writes that the object of Eduard’s perception is always already a picture or set of pictures, Breithaupt’s analysis suggests that the picture that his Eduard sees must be first constructed. For Breithaupt, it is Charlotte’s introduction of the door and window(s) into Eduard’s line of sight and onto the extant reality of the distant landscape that transforms that landscape into what Breithaupt labels the “Landschaft als Gebilde.” His formulation “[t]he frame produces a picture” in particular makes it clear that he considers the *Bild* that Eduard sees to be a product of human action, a product of the “application” of the frames of the door and window(s) to the reality of the landscape. For Breithaupt, it is the frames of the windows and door(s) that effectively transform the landscape viewed through them into a picture of a landscape. But the constructed nature of the “Landschaft als Gebilde” and the process by which it is constructed are ultimately beside the point for Breithaupt. For what makes the “Landschaft als Gebilde” a picture for Breithaupt is not the presence or absence of a frame itself—the Hauptmann’s unframed map is for Breithaupt also a picture—but the fact that the frames of the door and window(s) enable Charlotte to present the landscape to Eduard as a bounded and finite one, and therefore as if it were near enough to grasp. The term “picture,” as it is used by Breithaupt in the moss hut passage and throughout the remainder of his chapter on the *Wahlverwandtschaften* refers simply to any representation that depicts that of which it is a representation as “nearer,” “more limited,” “smaller or more

And yet, it would be hasty to assume from this that the frame and the landscape constitute, within that representational space, the exact same *kind* of things, that they have the same kind of presence, and that Eduard is aware of them in the same way. Consider the adverb “gleichsam” that precedes the “im Rahmen zeigten.” If we assume that the “gleichsam” is intended to modify the entire verbal phrase “im Rahmen zeigten,” then the implication of the sentence is that the landscape appears to Eduard as if it were depicted within a frame. Such an interpretation more readily accords with the traditional interpretation of the moss hut passage as a reference to the art historical trope of the window picture. If we read “gleichsam” as referring only to the prepositional phrase “im

finite than it is in reality” (131-35). Cf. also Fritz Breithaupt and Jill Suzanne Smith, “Culture of Images: Limitation in Goethe’s ‘Wahlverwandtschaften’,” *Monatshefte* 92 (2000): 302-320.

Nils Reschke’s 2003 essay “Die Wirklichkeit als Bild” argues that Goethe’s novel systematically questions and collapses the oppositional distinction between life and death, picture and text, art and reality. His analysis thus centers on the relation between reality, by which he means history or particular historical events around 1800, and its representation in the apparently still frames of Luciane’s and Ottilie’s *tableaux vivants*. The description of what Eduard sees from the moss hut plays a small, but significant role in his argument: “Nicht nur den Bildinhalten kommt Bedeutung zu, sondern auch der Darstellungsform selbst. Die Rahmenschau, die ja auch Charlotte als Wahrnehmungsmuster für Eduards ästhetisch-panoramatischen Landschaftsblick zu inszenieren sucht, läßt sich mit August Langen als Versuch begreifen, Kontingenzerfahrungen und verwirrende Sinnesvielfalt zu bewältigen, um sich die Welt als simultan überschaubares Bild bzw. als geordnete Abfolge einer Bilderkette herzurichten. Wie Attitüdenwechsel . . . suggerieren die für den flüchtigen Augenblick hergerichteten Bildnachstellungen emphatischer verstandene gesellschaftliche Veränderbarkeit einerseits, Konstanz im Wandeln durch Belebung tradierter ikonographischer Vorlagen andererseits” (Nils Reschke, “‘Die Wirklichkeit als Bild’: Die Tableaux vivants der *Wahlverwandtschaften*,” *Erzählen und Wissen: Paradigmen und Aporien ihrer Inszenierung in Goethes Wahlverwandtschaften*, ed. Gabriele Brandstetter (Freiburg i. Brsg.: Rombach, 2003) 137-167, here: 138, 140). Like Breithaupt, Reschke emphasizes the importance of the frame and framing as a means by which to contain, control, stabilize, and finally present to an observer that which she could not otherwise see and comprehend. Reschke distinguishes between Charlotte’s attempts to frame the landscape and the *tableaux vivants*. Whereas the former are straightforward pictures, the *tableaux vivants*, insofar as they attempt to replicate the copper engravings of famous paintings, problematize the medial distinction between picture and text. For Reschke, what must be overcome by the *tableaux* is not the distance of a faraway landscape, but the rapid and unstoppable progress of history and the succession of historical events. Thus, he draws an analogy between the *tableaux*, broadly conceived, as a means to stabilize and extract meaning from the *diachronic* succession of historical events and what he argues is Charlotte’s attempt to contain and present to Eduard the otherwise too-complex and visually overwhelming *synchronic* expanse of the natural landscape. Breithaupt’s and Reschke’s analyses differ insofar as the former emphasizes more strongly framing’s spatial dimension while the latter stresses its temporal function. Both critics share, however, the premise that frames ‘cut out,’ as it were, a certain segment of reality, thereby transforming this segment into a knowable and comprehensible picture. But does the process of framing really work in such a straightforward fashion?

Cf. also Tim Mehigan, “»From hence they resolve all Beings to Eyes«: Zur Blickproblematik in Goethes *Wahlverwandtschaften*,” *Erzählen und Wissen*, 169-185, here: 176, 179.

Rahmen,” then the implication of the sentence is that Eduard sees the landscape as if it were enclosed within a frame that doesn’t in fact exist, at least not in the material sense of something that can be touched or pointed to. In both cases, the “gleichsam” indicates that, unlike the landscape enclosed within it, that to which we have been referring as “the frame” isn’t fully—i.e. materially—present to the pictures that Eduard sees. The frame is invisible, intangible. It amounts to nothing more than the conceptual notion—the effect—of framing. And yet, it remains, as such, nonetheless a component of the pictures, one that, it is clear, very much determines and affects Eduard’s perception of the landscape by enabling him “to take it all in at a glance” (auf einen Blick übersehen konnte).

1.1 The Gardener’s Landscape: ‘Anblick’ vs. ‘Ausblick’

This way of seeing the landscape in its entirety is very particular, and contrasts, for example, with how Eduard sees his lands when the gardener describes them to him on the very first page of the novel. As the gardener tells his employer:

Man hat einen vortrefflichen *Anblick*: unten das Dorf, ein wenig rechter Hand die Kirche, über deren Thurmspitze man fast hinwegsieht; gegenüber das Schloß und die Gärten.

...
Dann . . . öffnet sich rechts das Thal und man sieht über die reichen Baumwiesen in eine heitere Ferne. Der Stieg die Felsen hinauf ist gar hübsch angelegt. (DW 7; emphasis A.N.)

Whereas Charlotte’s door and window(s) enable Eduard a kind of *Überblick*, or what—given the moss hut’s location high upon the cliff face—might legitimately be referred to as an expansive *Ausblick*, the gardener’s description affords him a detailed and object-oriented *Anblick*, one that picks out individual elements within the landscape and maps them out, as it were, in specific relation to one another. With this contrast of ‘Ausblick’

to ‘Anblick’ within its first two pages, the novel not only announces to the reader its preoccupation with questions of *how* and *as what* the characters—Eduard in particular—perceive the objects in front of them, it also suggests that the very same object may be seen differently at different moments and different places, by both the same and different people.

1.2 Methodology and Thesis

We will need to come back to the question of what leads Eduard to see the landscape now as an expanse, now in detail. For now, though, I want to focus on the more general question at hand: namely, what to make of the narrator’s assertion that the pictures that the baron sees through the openings of Charlotte’s hut are pictures because he sees what we must assume is the very real, non-representational landscape⁷ always already enclosed, as it were, within an immaterial frame that is nonetheless integral to and temporally co-emergent with the pictures that “generate” it. Or, to put it another way: what sorts of pictures are these, since they don’t seem to refer to or pick out objects in the world as “traditional” pictures do? In the pages that follow, I will be proposing that these pictures are akin to what the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein refers to as aspect, and defines as the perception of an object considered as a whole rather than with respect to

⁷ It is significant that the text refers here to “landscape” rather than to “nature.” Whereas “nature” suggests a certain degree of immediacy, the term “landscape” is closely linked to the parceling and mediation of nature in painting and poetry. See Eckart Lobsien, “Landschaft,” *Ästhetische Grundbegriffe (ÄGB): Historisches Wörterbuch in sieben Bänden*, ed. Karlheinz Barck (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2000-2005) vol. 3, 617-665, here: 618. For an analysis of how landscape is managed, manipulated, and transformed by knowledge and technology such that it becomes accessible, see David E. Wellbery, “Die Wahlverwandtschaften,” *Goethes Erzählwerk: Interpretationen*, ed. Paul Michel Lützeler and James E. McLeod (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1985) 291-316, here: 299-300, 315-316, and *passim*.

any of its specifiable properties, parts, or characteristics.⁸ As such, these pictures can be located somewhere in the middle ground between two terms that Goethe repeatedly opposes to one another throughout the *Wahlverwandtschaften*: namely, ‘Wirklichkeit’ (reality) and ‘Schein’ (appearance; the imaginary). I should note, however, that my discussion will not be grappling with the central opposition within Western philosophy that is usually evoked by the distinction between ‘Wirklichkeit’ and ‘Schein.’ My concern in this chapter isn’t, primarily, the difference between ideas and the intelligible, non-sensuous intuition of essences on the one hand and illusory phenomenality of that which is available to the senses and perception (*aisthesis*) on the other. For while the question of this overarching difference between the reality of ideas on the one hand and inauthentic appearance and the semblance of phenomena on the other may be at issue when one juxtaposes the novel to the novella embedded within it,⁹ close analysis will show that within the novel itself, what is really at stake in the repeated contrasting of these two terms isn’t the Platonic, metaphysical gap between true and essential ideas and material semblances. The world depicted by the novel proper is a thoroughly phenomenal one,¹⁰ in which the question is no longer the fundamental metaphysical one about

⁸ See Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophische Untersuchungen: Kritisch-genetische Edition*, ed. Joachim Schulte (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 2001) 1028-1029, a21-24, that is PU II 523. Further citations from this text will be included in the main text of the manuscript. Quotations from Part One of the *Untersuchungen* are taken from the *Spätfassung* and will be cited as PU I followed by the paragraph number. For quotations from what has been published as Part Two of the *Untersuchungen*, I will provide the page number where the passage can be found within the critical-historical edition. I will then cite them as PU II, followed by the page number where the passage may be found in Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Werkausgabe* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1995) vol. 1. Note that Section XI of Part Two, or MS 144, of the critical-historical edition follows Wittgenstein in numbering the aphorisms a1, a2, a3, and so on. Where relevant, I will also include these paragraph numbers after the relevant page number. See also Stephen Mulhall, *On Being in the World*, 28-29 and passim.

⁹ Walter Benjamin, “Goethes Wahlverwandtschaften,” *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhäuser (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1974) vol. 1.1, 123-201, here: 167-171 and 196.

¹⁰ I would argue that this is one of the necessary conclusions to be drawn from Walter Benjamin’s influential 1922 essay on “Goethes Wahlverwandtschaften.” In that essay, the young Walter Benjamin emphasizes the mythic and fateful, necessary and creatural natural world depicted in the novel—as opposed

whether that which the characters experience is real or merely appearance. The question is rather why, within this world that is distinctly marked as phenomenal, the novel is intent on characterizing the protagonists' perceptions of the same, apparently unchanged phenomena as pictures that look differently to them at different moments. A concern with precisely these kinds of seemingly unmotivated perceptual shifts also marks Section XI of Part Two of Wittgenstein's *Philosophische Untersuchungen*, but that interest isn't the only feature connecting Section XI to the *Wahlverwandtschaften*. Like Goethe's novel, Wittgenstein's discussion of these shifts is replete with references to pictures and takes places within a conceptual space that spans between material reality and another kind of 'Schein,' namely pretense. These striking similarities with regard to subject matter and terms show that while my juxtaposition of Goethe's early nineteenth-century novel with Wittgenstein's mid-twentieth-century observations is strikingly anachronistic and seems to meld two distinct discourses with one another, it isn't, for that reason, an arbitrary one. Indeed scholars such as Brian McGuiness, James C. Klagge, and Joachim Schulte have demonstrated the extent to which Goethe's writings on the sciences and on morphology have influenced Wittgenstein's thought.¹¹ But the claim that I seek to make about these two texts is the stronger one that Shoshana Felman makes in her reading of *Don Juan with J.L. Austin*, a claim that Judith Butler then reiterates on Felman's behalf in her afterword to the text. For while the duo of Goethe and Wittgenstein may be buttressed

to the novella embedded in it—as being devoid of reality. The aestheticized grounds of Eduard's estate and the world established by the characters constitute, for Benjamin, a space not unlike that of Plato's cave, whose occupants are deceived by their senses into taking the inauthentic shadowy appearances on the wall before them for real people. See Benjamin, "Goethes Wahlverwandtschaften," 131 sqq., 140-41 and Beatrice Hanssen, *Walter Benjamin's Other History: Of Stones, Animals, Human Beings, and Angels* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1998) 86.

¹¹ See, for example, the anthology *Goethe and Wittgenstein: Seeing the World's Unity in its Variety*, ed. Fritz Breithaupt, Richard Raatzsch and Bettina Kremberg (Frankfurt a. M.: Lang, 2003) as well as Joachim Schulte, "Chor und Gesetz: Zur morphologischen Methode bei Goethe und Wittgenstein," *Chor und Gesetz: Wittgenstein im Kontext* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1990) 11-42.

somewhat by the biographical fact that the latter read and valued the works of the former, Butler points out that very often “texts which we don’t think to put together,” texts whose authors are “unknowing” about the ways in which their works are implicated in other texts “display the ways in which they already, without knowing it, presuppose other texts.”¹² My claim is that the *Wahlverwandtschaften* and Section XI of Part Two of the *Untersuchungen* stand in just such a relation to one another.

I have briefly addressed methodology and put forth a working hypothesis. Let me now say a word about how I will go about demonstrating it. In developing my answers to the above questions about pictures, I will be shifting gears somewhat from previous approaches. Rather than looking directly at how pictures, or actual pictorial representations—which within the logic of the novel includes, for example, the *tableaux vivants*—are described and figured in the *Wahlverwandtschaften* as they do, I shall be coming at the question about pictures from an angle. That angle will involve considering first the frames through which objects are presented and viewed, and then asking how frames and framing might influence and determine a character’s perception of what he or she sees and hears. In the scenes at which I shall eventually be looking, the reader’s attention is drawn to a previously unnoticed “frame” through which a particular object is viewed because the character suddenly sees the object in an entirely new or different way, and not because of the explicit use of the word “frame.” For indeed, following its initial, prominent appearance in the expositional moss hut passage, the word “frame” peculiarly disappears from the novel, and is never used again, either by the narrator or by

¹² Judith Butler, “Afterword,” *The Scandal of the Speaking Body: Don Joan with J. L. Austin, or Seduction in Two Languages* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2002) 113–123, here: 121.

any of the characters.¹³ This disappearance of the term “frame” is all the more striking given that the very thing to which it refers—namely, the casing that encloses windows, doors, and other architectural spaces—repeatedly crops up as a central motif of the novel.

Certainly, this combination of the signifying term’s absence and signified object’s presence serves to highlight the concept of framing. But to what end? I want to suggest that the sustained absence of the word ‘frame’ is part of a conscious strategy within the text of the *Wahlverwandtschaften* to focus attention on the decisive, but often unnoticed role played by frames—which the text will show to be surrounding all objects of our perception—in determining the very way in which we perceive and understand the objects around us. At least that is what I want to begin to demonstrate in this next section, which centers on one of the most striking examples of a conspicuously present, but unremarked upon frame in the novel.

2. *Eduard’s Way of Seeing*

2.1 *A Window in My Brow*

The example occurs in a much-commented-upon passage from Chapter Four of Part One, and involves—surely not by chance—the act of looking through a window. Once again, the role of central protagonist falls to Eduard. The baron is reading aloud to the Captain (Hauptmann) and Charlotte. When he catches his wife looking into the book and following along, he stops reading and announces: “Wenn mir Jemand ins Buch sieht, so ist mir immer als wenn ich in zwey Stücke gerissen würde” (DW 44). Eduard goes on explain that reading aloud to someone from a book is, for him, comparable to an act of

¹³ Despite this, most critics and readers (cf. the works referenced in footnote 6) tend to believe that the novel is about frames and framing.

linguistic self-expression: “Das Geschriebene, das Gedruckte tritt an die Stelle meines eigenen Sinnes, meines eigenen Herzens” (DW 44). And when the listener subsequently takes it upon herself to read along with him, then it is for the baron as if “ein *Fensterchen* vor meiner Stirn, meiner Brust angebracht wäre, so dass der, dem ich meine Gedanken einzeln zuzählen, meine Empfindungen einzeln zureichen will, immer schon lange vorher wissen könnte, wo es mit mir hinaus wollte” (DW 44; emphasis A.N.).

Taking our cue from critics such as Fritz Breithaupt, we might begin our analysis of Eduard’s reprimand of Charlotte by noting that he claims possession, or authorship, of the text from which he reads.¹⁴ That the text has, in fact, been written by someone else matters little to him. Indeed, he considers “das Geschriebene, das Gedruckte” to be his own property in the manner that his own thoughts and feelings are by definition his own property: namely, inalienably private unless he chooses to communicate them.¹⁵ This sense that what is at stake for Eduard in the above admonition of Charlotte is private property is underscored when he goes on to describe that property as being under threat, as it were. For in imagining the existence of a window in his brow and another one in his breast, Eduard effectively presents his body as a piece of architecture and his intellect and heart as the possessions housed within it. Viewed in this way, Eduard’s rebuke of Charlotte comes to look not just similar to the moss hut passage in its subject matter, but very nearly like its inverse. Where that earlier segment depicts Eduard looking out of the door and window(s) onto his landscape property, the above excerpt shows him imagining someone looking into a window upon his furnished residential property. But that is not all. When taken together, these inversely parallel texts work in unison not only to

¹⁴ Breithaupt, *Jenseits der Bilder*, 131.

¹⁵ Here again one hears the Cartesian dualist. Wittgenstein also famously addresses the topic of privacy in what his critics have dubbed the private language argument. See PU I, 243-315.

emphasize the link between the exterior and interior, but also to demarcate both the outer and the inner—what Descartes conceived of as the *res extensa* and *res cogitans*¹⁶—as the kinds of perceptual objects to be examined in the text of the *Wahlverwandtschaften*.

Given the thematic and structural affinity—indeed unity—of these two texts, the omission of any reference to a frame or framing in the paragraphs about the windows in Eduard’s brow and breast must strike one not only as particularly glaring, but also as necessarily significant. In narrative terms, the effect of that contrast is to make framing into the focus of the episode, and to lead readers to wonder about the unmentioned frame around Eduard’s imaginary windows.¹⁷ Conceptually, the omission confronts us once again with a question that has already been raised in relation to the pictures of the landscape: namely, what exactly constitutes the inside and the outside of a window. What exactly do we mean when we speak of a window? Is a window, as the English word suggests, simply any opening in an edifice; or need the opening be covered by a piece of glass, as the Latin root of the German word “Fenster” implies; and must that (glass-covered) opening be enclosed by a frame, or should the frame be excluded as something external and secondary, a mere boundary?¹⁸ And finally, the omission of any reference to the frame and framing in the passage from Chapter Four singles Eduard out from among the novel’s other characters. On the level of the plot and of character, the omission will turn out to hinge on the fact that it is Eduard, rather than the narrator or any of the other characters, who speaks; Eduard who describes what and how an imaginary viewer sees

¹⁶ René Descartes, *Die Prinzipien der Philosophie* (Hamburg: Meiner, 2005) 92 sqq.

¹⁷ Framing is the sole element that cannot be integrated into the overarching unity binding the two inversely structured sections together.

¹⁸ For the different etymological genealogies, see the entry on “Fenster” in Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch* (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1854-1960) vol. 3, 1519-1523, here: 1519. For the tension between “window” and “frame” see also Anne Friedberg, *The Virtual Window: From Alberti to Microsoft* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2006) 1-6.

when she looks through the window; Eduard, who cares little—indeed, never notices—whether or not the window has a frame or framing function. Eduard’s rebuke emphasizes the window as a (glass-covered) opening that illicitly enables that which is normally obscured from view by the brow or the chest to become visible to his fellow conversationalists in the way that he, as we will see in the next section, takes *res extensa* to be visible to them: namely, in and for themselves, as they simply are. This is why visual perception stands, for Eduard, in contrast to linguistic self-expression. In rendering the latter superfluous, the window as (glassed) opening enables a kind of communication between exterior and interior, between Eduard’s audience and his “software” or “source code”—“wo es mit mir hinaus wollte”—that the baron cannot control since it bypasses him as the would-be medium entirely. In terms of modes of communication, Eduard clearly prefers what he takes to be the mediated linguistic self-expression associated with “mündlich[es] vortragen” to what he presumes is the direct visual perception of objects-in-themselves enabled by the window qua opening or transparent glass. But Eduard’s metaphorical analysis of what he takes to be Charlotte’s transgression isn’t, as we will see in a moment, the only indication that he believes himself and others to see objects in the world for themselves, as they simply are.

2.2 Seeing with Emotion: Eduard’s ‘Theilnahme’

Reading through the novel, one repeatedly comes upon descriptions of Eduard intently contemplating various people, objects, and topics under discussion. Upon meeting Eduard, who has just finished attaching the newly arrived shoots onto young rootstock, on the first page of the novel, we are told, for example, that he “legte die Geräthschaften

in das Futteral zusammen und *betrachtete* seine Arbeit *mit Vergnügen*, als der Gärtner hinzutrat und sich an dem *theilnehmenden* Fleiße des Herrn ergetzte” (DW 7; emphasis mine, A.N.). And scattered throughout his discussion with his wife about whether to invite his old friend the Captain and her adopted daughter Ottilie to live with them, we find the following:

Jemehr ich das alles *betrachte*, jemehr ich es *fühle*, desto *lebhafter* wird der *Wunsch* ihn bey uns zu sehen.
Es ist schön und liebenswürdig von dir, versetzte Charlotte, daß du des Freundes Zustand *mit so viel Theilnahme* bedenkst. (DW 10; emphasis mine, A.N.)

Ich weiß doch auch nicht, versetzte Eduard, wie du Ottilien so hoch stellen kannst! . . . Charlotte hatte nämlich damals dem . . . Eduard Ottilien absichtlich vorgeführt . . . Der Captain war auch angestiftet, Eduard aufmerksam zu machen; aber dieser, der seine frühe Liebe zu Charlotte hartnäckig im Sinne behielt, sah weder rechts noch links, und war nur *glücklich in dem Gefühl*, daß es möglich sey, eines so lebhaft gewünschten . . . Gutes endlich doch *theilhaft* zu werden. (DW 22-23; emphasis mine, A.N.)

Insofar as all of the verbs used by the text to describe Eduard’s attention to the different objects or topics under discussion are either a form of “sehen” or are synonymous with it, there necessarily exists some separation or gap—however small—between the viewer Eduard and that which he observes. As Aristotle points out in “On Sense and Sensible Objects,” the eye is not a reflexive organ. It can perceive neither itself nor anything lying upon it.¹⁹ Unlike hearing, which occurs when sound penetrates the ear and comes into contact with the eardrum, the sense of sight operates across distances.²⁰ And it is the magnitude of these distances—closer or further away—between the viewer’s eye and the perceived object that then determines not only what and how a person sees, but also the differences in how two people may see the same object. I will have more to say about

¹⁹ Aristotle, “On Sense and Sensible Objects,” *On the Soul; Parva Naturalia; On Breath*, trans. W. S. Hett (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1957) 215.

²⁰ Aristotle, “On Sense and Sensible Objects,” 219-221.

these differences later in the chapter. For now, though, I would like to continue with Eduard: at what distance does he stand from the objects he sees?

The text doesn't say explicitly, but as in the above examples, instances of Eduard's seeing are typically marked by a strong emotional reaction—as opposed to the cognitive ones that typify his wife. Sometimes, these feelings are expressed by the baron himself; often they are focalized attributions of emotion. Consider the following two passages:

Übrigens hatte Eduard mit Charlotten allein weniger Stoff zur Unterhaltung, besonders seitdem er den Tadel ihrer Parkanlagen, der ihm so gerecht schien, *auf dem Herzen fühlte*. Lange verschwieg er was ihm der Captain vertraut hatte; aber als er seine Gattin zuletzt beschäftigt *sah*, von der Mooshütte hinauf zur Anhöhe wieder mit Stüfchen und Pfädchen sich emporzuarbeiten; *so hielt er nicht länger zurück* . . . (DW 35; emphasis mine, A.N.)

Seine [sc. Eduard's] Theilname an der Unterhaltung, sein Genuß von Speis' und Trank vermindert sich mit jedem Tage. Nur noch einige Erquickung scheint er aus dem Glase zu schlürfen . . . Er *betrachtet* noch immer gern die verschlungenen Namenszüge [engraved in the glass] und sein ernstheiterer Blick dabey scheint anzudeuten, daß er auch jetzt noch auf eine Vereinigung *hoffe*. (DW 353; emphasis mine, A.N.)

One might object that the presence and immediacy of these surges in emotion signify little beyond an excitable temper. But that isn't how the novel, its narrator, and characters see it: they read Eduard's highly emotional responses as symptomatic of what they go on, in almost all of the above examples, to characterize as "Theilnahme."

Of course, Eduard isn't the only figure in the *Wahlverwandtschaften* to engage in and experience "Theilnahme," or what Grimm's *Deutsches Wörterbuch* defines as a desire to take part in something, as an attachment to, feeling for, identification with, even compassion for someone or something.²¹ Throughout the novel, 'Theilnahme' and its

²¹ See the entry on "Theilnahme" in Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch* (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1854-1960) vol. 21, 361.

derivatives are attributed to a variety of characters: the schoolmaster (Gehülfe) in relation to Otilie, the Captain in relation to Charlotte, Charlotte and Otilie in relation to the English lord whose son has left his father to seek a life in India. I will return to these instances of ‘Theilnahme’ later in the chapter. For the moment, let us turn our attention to Chapter Four of Part One, where ‘Theilnahme’ turns up about halfway through Eduard and the Captain’s impromptu lecture on the behavior and formation of chemical compounds. Charlotte has just asked the latter to describe to her a case in which “vier, bisher je zwey zu zwey verbundene Wesen in Berührung gebracht, ihre bisherige Vereinigung verlassen und sich aufs neue verbinden” (DW 52). Rather than complying with her wish, Eduard’s childhood friend instead exhorts her to wait instead for the arrival of the “chemisches Cabinet” so that she may see the activity of the compounds for herself. The Captain exclaims:

Man muß diese todtscheinenden und doch zur Thätigkeit innerlich immer bereiten Wesen wirkend vor seinen Augen sehen, *mit Theilnahme schauen*, wie sie einander suchen, sich anziehen, ergreifen, . . . aufzehren und sodann aus der innigsten Verbindung wieder in erneuter, neuer, unerwarteter Gestalt hervortreten: dann traut man ihnen erst ein ewiges Leben, ja wohl gar Sinn und Verstand zu, weil wir unsere Sinne kaum genügend fühlen, sie recht zu beobachten, und unsre Vernunft kaum hinlänglich, sie zu fassen. (DW 52; emphasis mine, A.N.)

If the Hauptman’s use of ‘Theilnahme’ is unexpected, it may be because it marks a perceptible shift in context from the occurrences of it to which I’ve just alluded. Where all of those instances seem to involve an (inter)personal attachment between the novel’s various characters, “Versuche” by contrast evokes a scene of scientific experimentation from which ‘Theilnahme’ typically must be excluded. The Captain, strikingly, seems to suggest doing precisely the opposite when, by way of what reads almost like an appositive, he elides scientific observation—“wirkend vor seinen Augen sehen”—with

the act of looking at an object with attachment—“mit Theilnahme schauen.” But as singular as the Captain’s understanding of scientific study seems to be, it in fact bears a strong resemblance to a stance that Goethe repeatedly puts forward in his writings on methodology in the natural sciences. Toward the beginning of “Zur Farbenlehre” (1810) Goethe remarks:

Die Lust zum Wissen wird bei dem Menschen zuerst dadurch angeregt, daß er bedeutende Phänomene gewahr wird, die seine Aufmerksamkeit an sich ziehen. Damit nun diese dauernd bleibe, so muß sich *eine innigere Theilnahme* finden, die uns nach und nach mit den Gegenständen bekannter macht. Alsdann bemerken wir erst eine große Mannigfaltigkeit, die uns als Menge entgegendringt.²²

And in the essay on “Anschauende Urteilskraft,” his 1817 (published 1820) reaction to Kant’s remarks on the possibility of an intuitive understanding,²³ he writes:

Zwar scheint der Verfasser [sc. Kant] hier auf einen göttlichen Verstand zu deuten, allein wenn wir ja im Sittlichen, durch Glauben an Gott, Tugend und Unsterblichkeit uns in eine obere Region erheben und an das erste Wesen annähern sollen: so dürfte’ es wohl im Intellectuellen derselbe Fall sein, daß wir uns, durch das Anschauen einer immer schaffenden Natur, zur geistigen Theilnahme an ihren Productionen würdig machten (WA, section II, vol. 6, 55; emphasis mine, A.N.).

It is to an examination of these writings that I want to turn now, since they will, I believe, help us to shed light not just on the Captain’s comment, but also on Eduard’s way of seeing.

²² Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, “[Entwurf einer Farbenlehre] Einleitung,” *Werke*, ed. on behalf of the Großherzogin Sophie von Sachsen (Weimar: Böhlau, 1887-1919) section II, vol. 1, xxix. References to this edition—the Weimarer Ausgabe—will hereinafter be annotated with the abbreviation WA.

²³ For more on Goethe’s engagement with Kant’s notion of intuition, see Dalia Nassar, “‘Idealism is nothing but genuine empiricism’: Novalis, Goethe, and the Ideal of Romantic Science,” *Goethe Yearbook* XVIII (2011): 67-95 and the chapter on “The Methodology of Intuitive Understanding” in Eckart Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years of Philosophy: A Systematic Reconstruction* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 2012) 250-276.

3.1 'Theilnahme' in Goethe's Writings on the Natural Sciences

Now, Goethe of course recognizes that, to lead to knowledge, scientific experimentation requires objectivity. His 1793 essay "Der Versuch als Vermittler von Objekt und Subjekt" opens with precisely this point.²⁴ But elsewhere in Goethe's scientific writings, it becomes clear that he believes that rigid objectivity based on unbending concepts and absolute separation between subject and object can get the scientist interested in the natural world only so far, and is ultimately insufficient for an accurate understanding of that world.²⁵ This is because, for Goethe as for the Captain, the nature under observation is a *creatively* living and changing one (ZM, 9-10).²⁶ To comprehend living nature, the scientist must grasp the inner, or originary, mechanism that drives "nature's productions"

²⁴ Goethe, "Der Versuch als Vermittler von Objekt und Subject," *WA*, section II, vol. 11, particularly 21-23.

²⁵ Indicative of this are those moments in which Goethe points to the contributions of "Scharfsinn" to the scientist's progress. Consider, for example, this comment about Linnaeus: "Die meisten jener verschieden gebildeten Organe, welche Linné mit dem Namen Nektarien bezeichnet, lassen sich unter diesem Begriff vereinigen; und wir finden auch hier Gelegenheit, den großen Scharfsinn des außerordentlichen Mannes zu bewundern, der, ohne sich die Bestimmung dieser Theile ganz deutlich zu machen, sich auf eine Ahndung verließ, und sehr verschieden scheinende Organe mit Einem Namen zu belegen wagte" ("Zur Morphologie," *WA*, section II, vol. 6, 51-52; also 73, but not about Linnaeus). See also Goethe's discussion of the value of the difficult-to-control "scharfe Urteilkraft" in the essay on the "Versuch als Vermittler" (*WA*, section II, vol. 11, 22-23). Significant here is also Goethe's reflections on the methodology of Caspar Friedrich Wolff: "so setzt er [sc. Wolff] als Grundmaxime aller seiner Forschungen: daß man nichts annehmen, zugeben und behaupten könne, als was man mit Augen gesehen und andern jederzeit wieder vorzuzeigen im Stande sei. Deßhalb ist er immer bemüht auf die Anfänge der Lebensbildung durch mikroskopische Untersuchungen zu dringen, und so die organischen Embryonen von ihrer frühesten Erscheinung bis zur Ausbildung zu verfolgen. Wie vortrefflich diese Methode auch sei, durch die er so viel geleistet hat; so dachte der treffliche Mann doch nicht, daß es ein Unterschied sei zwischen Sehen und Sehen, daß die Geistes-Augen mit den Augen des Leibes in stetem lebendigen Bunde zu wirken haben, weil man sonst in Gefahr geräth zu sehen und doch vorbeizusehen" ("Zur Morphologie," *WA*, section II, vol. 6, 155-156). References to Goethe's "Zur Morphologie" will hereinafter be annotated with the abbreviation ZM.

²⁶ This is readily apparent if one thinks of the Captain's description of the chemical compounds, which is itself reminiscent of the following lines from "Zur Morphologie": "Jedes Lebendige ist kein Einzelnes, sondern eine Mehrheit; selbst insofern es uns als Individuum erscheint, bleibt es doch eine Versammlung von lebendigen selbstständigen Wesen, die der Idee, der Anlage nach, gleich sind, in der Erscheinung aber gleich oder ähnlich, ungleich oder unähnlich werden können. Diese Wesen sind theils ursprünglich schon verbunden, theils finden und vereinigen sie sich. Sie entzweien sich und suchen sich wieder und bewirken so eine unendliche Produktion auf alle Weise und nach allen Seiten" (10). Elsewhere in the same text, Goethe describes living or organic matter as engaged in the production of "ein schaffendes Gewebe" (14). Relevant here is also the earlier passage from the "Anschauende Urteilkraft," in which Goethe refers to "einer immer schaffenden Natur" (*WA*, section II, vol. 11, 55).

to transcend themselves continually and grow (ZM, 9-10).²⁷ But this mechanism, which Goethe refers to in the “Vorarbeiten zu einer Physiologie der Pflanzen” as the “Urkörper” and understands as the idea or archetype of an organism (ZM, 306),²⁸ resides neither in the individual parts of the organism nor in the individual stages of a natural process (ZM, 8-9). Nor, indeed, is it to be found in the sum of those parts, since this sum would capture only one fixed combination of those parts at an isolated moment in time (ZM, 9). For Goethe, the upshot of these insights is that the inner mechanism can be understood neither by further study of the exhaustive experiments that replicate a natural process from start to finish nor by conducting additional ones.²⁹ Indeed, Goethe argues that it can only be grasped when, with an intuitive leap that allows her to be cognizant of the organism—i.e. of each of its different parts across the multiple stages of their growth—as a spatial and temporal whole, the researcher brings those individual parts into *relational development* with one another, thereby replicating in thought the organism’s growth process.³⁰

The researcher’s action of holding in her mind *as one* the various elements of the organism in each of the stages of its development is what Goethe refers to throughout his

²⁷ Here I also have in mind those many passages throughout “Zur Morphologie,” and more particularly in “Die Metamorphose der Pflanzen,” in which Goethe speaks of “die innere Identität der verschiedenen Pflanzenteile” (ZM, 56-60, 121, and *passim*) or in those paragraphs where he contrasts the visible characteristics of a plant with its “Ursprung” (ZM, 25, 43, 46 and *passim*).

²⁸ In the writings on “Zur Morphologie,” Goethe speaks of an “Urpflanze” and an “Urtier,” and defines them as the concept, or *idea*, of the plant or animal as opposed to the empirical plant or animal (ZM, 20).

²⁹ The need to follow and reproduce a natural process from start to finish is discussed in “Der Versuch als Vermittler,” (WA, section II, vol. 11, 31-33); exemplified and thematized by “Die Metamorphose der Pflanzen,” see particularly paragraphs 79 and 84 (WA, section II, vol. 6, 67 and 71); and what has been published as “Polarität” (WA, section II, vol. 11, 164). See also Eckart Förster, “Goethe and the ‘Auge des Geistes,’” *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte* 75 (2001): 87-101, here: 92-93.

³⁰ See Goethe’s two essays “Anschauende Urteilskraft” and “Bedenken und Ergebung,” WA, section II, vol. 11, 54-57 as well as “Polarität,” WA, section II, vol. 11, 164; see also WA, section II, vol. 6, 10; and §§ 102 and 120 of “Die Metamorphose der Pflanzen,” WA, section II, vol. 6, 78-79 and 92-93; and “Versuch als Vermittler,” WA, section II, vol. 11, 32-33. See also Förster, “Goethe and the ‘Auge des Geistes,’” 92-93.

scientific writings as “Anschauung” or the act of “Anschauen.”³¹ Eduard and the Captain use the term, its derivatives, and synonyms—I take the Captain’s “wirkend vor Augen” to be one of these synonyms—several times during their lecture on chemical compounds. And although its sense in each of these latter instances is always the literal one of seeing the *evidentia* of the compounds’ pairings and re-pairings for oneself during a series of experiments rather than hearing or reading about these pairings discursively from a book, this literal sense is inherent in Goethe’s more nuanced understanding of the term in the empirical texts as the opposite of discursive knowledge. The researcher’s second action of relating the different parts of the plant to one another developmentally in order to grow the organism, as it were, in thought is what Goethe means when he exhorts his readers in “Polarität” to “bring forth” (hervorbringen) “einen [lebendigen] Gegenstand in allen seinen Theilen . . . im Geiste wieder,” and in the above citation from “Anschauende Urteilkraft” “zur geistigen Theilnahme an ihren [sc. nature’s] Productionen.” The second action is also what the Captain believes himself to mean when he insists to Charlotte that one must “look at” (schauen) the compounds “mit Theilnahme.” The two actions—‘das Anschauen’ and ‘mit Theilnahme schauen’—must be conceived of as constituting a single, intertwined process.³² Nonetheless, for the purposes of this paper, we will be focusing primarily on the second action, for it isn’t at all clear why the process of cognitively growing a natural organism should be considered an instance of ‘Theilnahme’? Just what exactly does Goethe imagine the scientist to be doing?

³¹ See, for example, “Metamorphose der Pflanzen,” §§73 and 102; and *WA*, section II, vol. 6, 174-175: “Ich wünschte man durchdränge sich recht von der Wahrheit: daß man keineswegs zur vollständigen Anschauung gelangen kann, wenn man nicht Normales und Abnormes immer zugleich gegen einander schwankend und wirkend betrachtet.” See also Förster, “Goethe and the ‘Auge des Geistes,’” 93-94.

³² This holds even at those times, as in the quote from the “Anschauende Urteilkraft,” when they are presented as being sequentially distinct, with the possibility of ‘Theilnahme’ being dependent upon the ability for ‘Anschauung.’

An answer to these questions emerges when the process of cultivating a living organism in one's mind is considered in relation to an edict from the beginning of "Der Versuch des Vermittlers." Recall that Goethe begins the essay by stating that scientific study requires that the self and its preferences be set aside, for it is only then that the scientist, equidistant between herself (i.e. her everyday preferences) and the natural organism she hopes to understand, can engage with the organism "in Beziehung auf sich selbst."³³ Within the context of this initial need to disengage from the self and its interests, the subsequent process of reproducing an organism of nature reads as the demand for the investigator to leave herself even further behind and *to move beyond* the objectivity that doesn't in fact grant insight into the ideas driving the changes in the natural world *toward* the organism itself: she must, through imitation or mimesis, become like nature itself. More specifically, she must discard or at least adjust her mindset and concepts—which are concepts precisely because they are strictly defined and rigidly fixed, and thus suited more to the analysis of mechanics than of nature (ZM, 8)—such that they and she become, as Goethe writes in "Zur Morphologie," "so beweglich und bildsam, nach dem Beispiele mit dem sie [sc. nature] uns vorgeht" (ZM, 10).

I want to dwell for a minute on the two words "beweglich" and "bildsam." It would seem that their figurative meanings within the immediate context³⁴ of the "Morphologie" essay from which I've lifted them leaves little room for productive speculation about a possible link to the element of visuality implied by Goethe's sustained use of verbs such as "schauen," "betrachten," and "beobachten" throughout the

³³ Goethe, "Versuch als Vermittler," *WA*, section II, vol. 11, 22.

³⁴ Goethe has just introduced the concept of a morphology, and opened up a distinction between "Gestalt" as that which assumes a living to be static, fully formed, and having a fixed essence and "Bildung" as that which emphasizes the fact that organisms are "in einer steten Bewegung" (ZM, 9-10).

writings on the natural sciences. Indeed, when the *Goethe-Wörterbuch* defines “bildsam” as “geistig flexibel,” it quotes the very sentence in which the two terms are found as an example of that usage.³⁵ And yet, the alliterative pairing of “beweglich” with “bildsam” works to put the reader in mind of an altogether different figural meaning. As a result of their proximity to one another, “beweglich” and “bildsam” combine to remind us that the scientist’s movement of ‘Theilnahme’ occurs by visual means, and has visual consequences. More particularly: “beweglich” and “bildsam” combine to evoke, if not the anachronistic visual medium of the cinema—which, interestingly enough, was also often referred to as “the moving pictures”—then certainly its predecessor, the *Daumenkino*.³⁶ “Beweglich” focuses our attention on the “Bild” contained within “bildsam” at the same time that it sets that root in motion. “Bildsam” renders “beweglich” that much more plastic, while also providing that plasticity of movement with a content. And, as it turns out, the phrase is embedded within a cluster of other references to visual representation and movement. In laying out his project, for example, Goethe reflects upon the similarity between morphology and representational forms of art:

Es hat sich . . . auch in dem wissenschaftlichen Menschen zu allen Zeiten ein Trieb hervorgetan, die lebendigen Bildungen als solche zu erkennen . . . Wie nah dieses wissenschaftliche Verlangen mit dem Kunst- und Nachahmungstribe zusammenhänge, braucht wohl nicht umständlich ausgeführt zu werden.

Man findet daher in dem Gange der Kunst, des Wissens und der Wissenschaft mehrere Versuche, eine Lehre zu gründen und auszubilden, welche wir die Morphologie nennen. (ZM, 8-9)

³⁵ See the entry on “bildsam,” *Goethe-Wörterbuch*, ed. Berlin-Brandenburgischen Akademie der Wissenschaften et al. (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1978 sqq.) vol. 2, 697-711 as well as the entry on “beweglich,” *Goethe-Wörterbuch*, vol. 2, 596-605. The *Goethe-Wörterbuch* defines “beweglich” as having the ability or willingness to shift or change positions, and notes that the term is often used to describe visual phenomena and impressions, including “Bild.”

³⁶ In his analysis of Goethe’s method, Eckart Förster also refers to “film.” See Eckart Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years of Philosophy: A Systematic Reconstruction* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 2012) 258-260.

And in paragraph 120 of “Die Metamorphose,” Goethe writes about the necessity of visual movement for the study of living organisms:

Es versteht sich hier von selbst, daß wir ein allgemeines Wort haben müßten, wodurch wir dieses in so verschiedene Gestalten metamorphosierte Organ bezeichnen, und alle Erscheinungen seiner Gestalt damit vergleichen könnten: gegenwärtig müssen wir uns damit begnügen, dass wir uns gewöhnen *die Erscheinungen vorwärts und rückwärts gegeneinander zu halten*. (WA, section II, vol. 6, 92-93; emphasis mine, A.N.)

What does it mean to say that the researcher’s empathetic movement of ‘*Theilnahme*’ toward the object of study occurs not just in visual, but more specifically in stroboscopic terms? In the context of the “Morphologie” and Goethe’s other writings on natural science, it means the possibility of visualizing the various changes that the organism undergoes as a single, unified movement of growth, a possibility that is itself grounded in the ability to abstract from the frames that enclose and separate each of the individual parts or stages of the organism from one another.³⁷ Of course, this ability was always already implicit in the scientist’s empathetic mental movement of ‘*Theilnahme*’ past objectivity to occupy a position so asymptotically close to the object of perception that she would at some point no longer be able to see the frames separating its individual parts and stages of the organism from one another. Our excursion into Goethe’s scientific writings has shown us why this is so.

³⁷ Goethe doesn’t mention frames or framings in the “Morphologie,” but the fundamental problem of morphology—the question of how one moves from one stage of development to the next and of how to unify the different stages into a whole—calls to mind the problem of how film construes a whole out of a series of frames. See James Conant, “The World of a Movie,” *Making a Difference*, ed. Niklas Forsberg and Susanne Jansson (Stockholm: Thales, 2011) 293-324, especially 301-305. Conant analyzes how techniques of visual presentation absorb the viewer in the picture such that he forgets about the frame.

3.2 'Theilnahme' in the Wahlverwandtschaften

Let us now turn our attention back to the uses of 'Theilnahme' in the *Wahlverwandtschaften*, beginning with the Captain's. We have seen that Eduard's friend effectively quotes Goethe when he responds to Charlotte's request for a description of the compounds' behavior by insisting that one must look (schauen) at the compounds "mit Theilnahme." With these words, he seems to be advocating precisely that which Goethe calls for in his scientific writings: namely, that leaving oneself and a conventional notion of objectivity behind, one must attempt through mimesis to approximate nature's flexibility. But here a problem arises. For though the Captain manages to minimize the objective gap separating him from the compounds, he doesn't attune himself to them so much as anthropomorphize them. His description of the compounds as "todtscheinend[e]" "Wesen" who "search for," "attract," "take hold of," and "consume" others of their kind imbues them with a human interiority and intentionality. The Captain's words thus betray a tendency to impose upon nature and to gauge it according to a human scale.

Unlike the Captain, most of the other characters to whom the text of the *Wahlverwandtschaften* attributes feelings of 'Theilnahme' replicate the movement of Goethe's scientist away from the self and objectivity toward what is almost, but never fully, an identificatory experience with the other. Certainly, this is the case with Otilie and Charlotte's passing 'Theilnahme' for the English lord and with the schoolmaster's 'Theilnahme' for Otilie. The one exception is, of course, Eduard, who in his displays of 'Theilnahme' traces out a vector of assimilation that resembles the Captain's anthropomorphizing movement toward the chemical compounds. But while Eduard's co-

opting ‘Theilnahme’ sets him quite apart from the novel’s other characters in terms of empathy, it doesn’t, at least not in and of itself, single out his way of seeing the things and people around him. The effects of ‘Theilnahme,’ whether compassionate or co-opting, upon she who experiences it are the same. As with Goethe’s scientist and the other characters, Eduard’s ‘Theilnahme’ binds him to that which he sees, and in doing so effectively eliminates much, though not all, of the vision-enabling distance about which Aristotle speaks in the excerpt quoted earlier. And so, like them, Eduard still sees, but he stands emotionally, if not physically, too near to the perceived object to be able to notice that it is enclosed within the kind of frame to which the narrator has drawn our attention in the moss hut passage.

No, the particularity of Eduard’s ‘Theilnahme’ is not that it leads him to disregard the frame, but rather the singular regularity and indiscrimination with which it prompts him to do so. This indiscrimination becomes apparent when Eduard’s bouts of ‘Theilnahme’ are compared not to Charlotte’s, the Captain’s, or even the schoolmaster’s—since their feelings of ‘Theilnahme’ are limited in both number and intensity—but to Ottilie’s increasingly numerous ones.

Mit welchem *Empfindungen betrachtete* Ottilie die späteren Blumen, die sich erst anzeigten, deren Glanz und Fülle dereinst an Eduards Geburtstag, dessen Feyer sie sich manchmal versprach, prangen, ihre Neigung und Dankbarkeit ausdrücken sollten. (DW 157; emphasis mine; A.N.)

Ottilie allein *betrachtete* den Eingeschlummerten, der noch immer seine freundliche einnehmende Miene behalten hatte, *mit einer Art von Neid*. Das Leben ihrer Seele war getödtet, warum sollte der Körper noch erhalten werden? (DW 259; emphasis mine; A.N.)

An jenem Orte will ich mich erinnern, wie manche Prüfungen ich ausgestanden, und wie klein, wie nichtig sie waren gegen die, die ich nachher erfahren mußte. Wie *heiter* werde ich die Verlegenheiten der jungen Aufschöblinge *betrachten*,

bey ihren kindlichen Schmerzen *lächeln* und sie mit leiser Hand aus allen kleinen Verirrungen herausführen. (DW 322; emphasis mine, A.N.)³⁸

But although Otilie seems to be progressively susceptible to the kinds of emotionally tinged visual experiences that have all along characterized Eduard, her way of coming to see and understand the people and things around her still differs from his on one significant point. Whereas Eduard reacts emotionally, attaching himself to almost *everyone* and *everything* with which he comes into visual contact, the convergence of sight and emotion is, in Otilie's case, explicitly characterized by the narrator as an effective narrowing of her visual field to a single perspective. Otilie comes to see everything—even those things that have little or nothing to do with Eduard—in relation to him. The narrator writes:

Dabey . . . war sie [sc. Otilie] ruhig und heiter; Otilie schien es nur: denn in allem beobachtete sie nichts als Symptome, ob Eduard wohl bald erwartet werde, oder nicht. Nichts interessirt sie an allem als diese Betrachtung. (DW 154)

[S]o gab es einen hübschen erfreulichen Aufzug, in welchem der Architect eine artige Folge von Stellungen und Thätigkeiten für den Fries eines Gartenhauses sich anmerkte; Otilie hingegen sah darin nur eine Art von Parade welche den rückkehrenden Hausherrn bald begrüßen sollte. (DW 155)

Perhaps it is because Otilie's way of seeing things is grounded in her love for Eduard, but the narrator as well as the other characters indulge Otilie's visual-emotional idiosyncrasies to an extent that they do not tolerate Eduard's tendency to look at all manner of things with 'Theilnahme.' When Charlotte and the narrator speak of Eduard's 'Theilnahme,' their words almost always convey impatience and benevolent

³⁸ Although the text never explicitly attributes feelings of 'Theilnahme' to Otilie, the familiar admixture of emotion with sight in the above passages suggests that she has become increasingly attached to the things she sees. Her attachment renders her, like Eduard (and the other figures who now and again have feelings of 'Theilnahme'), visually too near to the things before her to see anything but them. And because the objects of perception entirely exhaust her visual field, Otilie, again like Eduard (and the others characters), takes the identity of the things she sees for granted.

admonition—admonition that seems to be prompted neither by the visual logic of ‘Theilnahme’ itself nor by the inconsiderate behavior to which it often leads. To what, then, might they be objecting? I want to suggest that the cause of their irritation lies with Eduard’s *rampant* ‘Theilnahme,’ as it means that he *never notices* the frame enclosing the objects of his perception, and thus *believes* himself to see the objects of phenomenal reality in a direct and unmediated way: that is, for what they ‘are’ in themselves. To put it another way: he takes the objects and persons around him to be always fully identical to his perception of them, and never considers that those things and people might be viewed or understood in other ways. As a result, Eduard assumes that the way he sees things is the way that they *are*. He fails to recognize that there might be an alternative way of seeing something or that someone else may see that which he sees differently. Precisely because he cannot comprehend such differences in the perception of an object, person or situation, he can neither process divergent points of view nor accept not getting his own way.³⁹ Eduard’s ‘Theilnahme’—expressed throughout the novel as surges of strong emotion—therefore confirms as a pattern that inclination originally glimpsed in our analysis of his metaphor about the frameless windows in his forehead and chest from Chapter Four of Part One.

That a frame of the kind the narrator describes in the moss hut passage does in fact surround the perceived or contemplated object, intervening between it and the characters’ perception of it—about this the text couldn’t be clearer. Indeed, there have been implicit indications of its existence in the passages on ‘Theilnahme’ at which we have been looking. These indications can, however, only become understandable as such

³⁹ An example of this inability is Eduard’s unsuccessful attempt, at Charlotte’s behest, to compose a reply to the Captain’s letter (DW 17-18).

after we consider, in the next section, a passage from the end of Chapter Twelve, Part One about how Charlotte perceives herself and about the role that her surroundings play in that self-perception. As part of my analysis, I shall be relating the passage about Charlotte back to the moss hut passage, on the grounds that the two are closely interrelated. But I shall also be working throughout Section Four to establish a connection between both of these passages and Wittgenstein's discussion of aspect shifts and aspect perception in Section XI of Part Two of the *Untersuchungen*.

4 Charlotte in Her Bedroom

4.1 A Sudden, Seemingly Inexplicable Shift in Self-perception

About halfway through Chapter Twelve of Part One of the *Wahlverwandtschaften*, the narrator tells us that Charlotte desires to return to her bedroom directly after dinner in order to review all that had passed between her and the Captain earlier in the day (DW 119). The events on which she will reflect have taken place directly after her husband had left her and his friend alone together in a canoe on the lake. It is important to note that the narrative follows Eduard back to the house rather than staying with the couple in the canoe. Because of this, the reader learns about the events that unfold between Charlotte and the Captain—the extent of their regard for one another, the kiss that has passed between them, Charlotte's self-disciplined request that the Captain depart—not only after the fact, but at a very particular and crucial moment in Charlotte's day: namely, just as she is making her way to her bedroom, and then in her bedroom. This small tweak in the narrative chronology, this insertion of the events that have passed between Charlotte and the Captain into the brief interval of time between her departure from dinner and her

arrival at her bedroom amounts to an instance of narrative framing, and can hardly be without import.⁴⁰ Indeed, once in her bedroom, Charlotte finds that, contrary to her initial intentions, her thoughts are given over to Eduard. She finds, moreover, that “sie sich *als Gattinn Eduards empfinden und betrachten mußte*” (DW 122; emphasis mine, A.N.). This indication of an about-face in Charlotte’s self-perception is striking because the remainder of the paragraph that it introduces makes it clear that Charlotte herself—her physical, mental, and emotional make-up—remains altogether unaltered. It is true that she has asked the Captain to take his leave of her, but she has done so out of a sense of marital obligation, and not because her feelings for “den Freunden” have changed. Indeed, the text speaks of the role played by strength of character in Charlotte’s ability to overcome the “Widersprüchen” between her attraction to the Captain and her sense of duty to her husband (DW 122; emphasis mine; A.N.).

4.2 *The Bedroom as Contextual Frame*

Failing to detect any particular significance or wider resonance to the above description of a sudden and peculiarly unmotivated shift in Charlotte’s self-perception, critics have largely ignored it. But Charlotte’s visual experience isn’t an isolated phenomenon, either within the text of the *Wahlverwandtschaften* or outside of it. In the way in which it opens up a difference between a closely observed and unchanging object and the new manner in which that object is suddenly perceived, the passage is, within the novel, reminiscent of two earlier passages that, taken together, also tell of a shift in an observer’s perceptual experience of a familiar object. I refer of course to the scenes from the beginning of the novel in which Eduard sees the familiar and unchanged landscape of his property first as

⁴⁰ Indeed, one might argue that this tweak or insertion amounts to an act of *narrative* framing.

an ‘Anblick’ and then as an ‘Ausblick.’ It is important to note that the text will go on to contrast these two perceptual experiences to yet a third kind of ‘Blick,’ for Eduard’s perception of the still unchanged landscape shifts yet again when he looks at the map that the Captain has made of his estate:

[D]ie Abende und frühsten Morgen brachte er [sc. the Captain] mit Aufzeichnen und Schraffiren zu. Schnell war auch alles lavirt und illuminirt, und Eduard *sah* seine Besitzungen auf das deutlichste, aus dem Papier, wie eine neue Schöpfung, hervorgewachsen. Er glaubte sie jetzt erst kennen zu lernen; sie schienen ihm jetzt erst recht zu *gehören*. (DW 33; emphasis mine, A.N.)

Other instances of such shifts include the baron’s altered perception not only of the work Charlotte has done on the moss hut, but also of his wife as well as her adopted daughter. I shall have more to say about the changes in Eduard’s perception of these people and objects later in the essay. Beyond the world of the novel, Charlotte’s experience of herself in Chapter Twelve may be said to bear more than a passing similarity to the following one described by Wittgenstein toward the beginning of Section XI of Part Two of the *Untersuchungen*: “[i]ch betrachte ein Gesicht, auf einmal bemerke ich seine Ähnlichkeit mit einem andern. Ich sehe, daß es sich nicht geändert hat; und sehe es doch anders” (1024, a1-a3; PU II 518). Wittgenstein goes on to liken this paradoxical visual experience to the one had by many observers of *Vexierbilder*. In the most famous example of the latter, an observer suddenly perceives a drawing of a duck’s head as a rabbit’s head, despite the fact that the drawing itself hasn’t been altered in any way (1025-1028, a7-a18; PU II 519-522). So what, we might ask, accounts for the shift in perception in each of the above cases?

With regard to the shift in Charlotte’s perception of herself, the text of the *Wahlverwandtschaften* couldn’t be more explicit. It is her bedroom that *compels* her, as it

were, to alter her perception of herself, *compels* her to see and define herself, consciously and actively, in a way that had gradually been allowed to recede since shortly after the arrival of Otilie and the Captain. The narrator writes: “Nun aber stand [Charlotte] in ihrem Schlafzimmer, wo sie sich als Gattinn Eduards empfinden und betrachten mußte” (DW 122). Let us set aside for the moment the “nun,” in order to ask just how the frame of the bedroom and the space that it encloses can have such an effect—an effect that reads and feels like an expression of a necessity—on Charlotte, a woman who, as the above quote makes clear, is nothing if not deliberate and in control. I want to suggest that the influence of the frame of the bedroom and the spatial and temporal field that it encloses is something like the influence of context—heeded and moderated by Charlotte herself. It is the influence of those circumstances that make up the setting or situation for an event, action—such as Charlotte’s perception of herself—statement, or idea. Context delineates, first and foremost, the physical surroundings in which something takes place. But the concept of ‘context’ can be expanded to include the abstract, figural, or symbolic coordinates of an event or action as well as those people, things, and events with which a place is associated. In Charlotte’s case, the most important such association is Eduard’s recent “wunderliche[r] Nachtbesuch” (DW 122). Eduard’s visit underlines Charlotte’s private chamber—the place to which she instinctively retreats in order to be alone (with the Captain)—as the evocation of her union with him. Now, most dictionaries note that context constitutes the terms in which an action, event, or statement can be fully understood and assessed. As described by the narrator at the end of Chapter Twelve, context is ascribed a much more central role in the determination of how something is to be seen and comprehended. Indeed, it will turn out that its impact on Charlotte is more

along the lines attributed to it by Wittgenstein in his own discussion of such perceptual shifts. Consider, for example, the role played by context in the following remarks from Section XI:

Ich sehe ein Bild, das einen lächelnden Kopf darstellt. Was tue ich, wenn ich das Lächeln einmal als ein freundliches, einmal als ein böses auffasse? Stelle ich es mir nicht oft in einer räumlichen und zeitlichen *Umgebung* vor, die freundlich oder böse ist? So könnte ich mir zu dem Bild vorstellen, daß der Lächelnde auf ein spielendes Kind herunterlächelt, oder aber auf das Leiden eines Feindes. Daran wird nichts geändert dadurch, daß ich mir auch die auf den ersten Blick liebliche Situation durch eine weitere *Umgebung* wieder anders deuten kann. . . . (PU I, 539; emphasis mine, A.N.)

Man kann sich sehr Verschiedenes vorstellen, z. B.: “Nicht, nicht! Ich fürchte mich!”

“Ich fürchte mich. Ich muß es leider gestehn.”

“Ich fürchte mich noch immer ein wenig, aber nicht mehr so, wie früher.”

“Ich fürchte mich im Grunde noch immer, obwohl ich mir’s nicht gestehn will.”

. . .

Zu jedem dieser Sätze gehört ein anderer Tonfall, zu jedem ein anderer *Zusammenhang*. . . . (1016; PU II 510; emphasis mine, A.N.)

Man fragt sich: “Was bedeutet ‘ich fürchte mich’ eigentlich, worauf ziele ich damit?” Und es kommt natürlich keine Antwort, oder eine, die nicht genügt. Die Frage ist: “In welcher Art *Zusammenhang* steht es?” (1016-1017; PU II 511; emphasis mine, A.N.)⁴¹

4.3 *The Bedroom as an Internal, Immaterial Frame*

But for context to have the effect that Wittgenstein implicitly attributes to it in the above examples; for it to be the case that Charlotte’s bedroom amounts to the *contextual* cause of the change in how she sees herself, that physical structure of the bedroom and the space it encloses must be understood not simply as the literal frame and space that it is, but more particularly as a frame and space of the sort described by the narrator in the

⁴¹ For more examples that highlight the significance of context, of “*Umgebung*,” or “*Zusammenhang*,” see also Ludwig Wittgenstein, 1005-1006, PU II 500c-501a500 sq.; 1027, PU II 521; 1061, PU II 554d--555; 557d, 558c.1033-1034, a45, PU II 528; 1053, PU II 546; and 1055-1056, PU II 548.

moss hut passage. That is, the bedroom cannot be conceived of as an external, after-the-fact addition to Charlotte's perception of herself. Rather, it must be seen as located within the perceptual boundaries of that which Charlotte sees. And like the frame surrounding Eduard's perception of the landscape, the bedroom must be integral to and given with Charlotte's self-perception. For if it were otherwise, if the bedroom were in fact external to the perception, a change in frame would not result in a different perception of self and yet no accompanying change in what that perception is a perception of: namely, Charlotte herself, her physical, mental and emotional make-up, her abiding attachment to the Captain.

The comparison of the bedroom to the frames described by the narrator in the moss hut episode may be taken further. For like the frames given with the landscape that Eduard sees, Charlotte's bedroom constitutes no more than the effect of framing, and is ultimately immaterial to her self-perception. As with the picture that Eduard sees of the landscape, the frame and the Charlotte enclosed within it are not the same kinds of things. At least, they can't be said to have the same kind of presence for Charlotte, since she would certainly never conceive of the bedroom as part of herself, even as it exerts its sway over her. Moreover, as no mention is made of a mirror, we can conclude that Charlotte sees herself only metaphorically: Charlotte's self-perception may be likened to a self-conception.⁴² This means that while she is effectively aware of the bedroom in which she stands and registers that it encloses her in the manner of a frame, her gaze need not and probably does not intersect it. For though the text does not use the word explicitly, the entire last paragraph of Chapter Twelve stylizes the baroness' perceptual

⁴² This point recalls Wittgenstein's observation at PU II 551c that "der Begriff ›ich sehe [or betrachte] es jetzt als...‹" is related to the notion "›ich stelle mir jetzt *das* vor.‹"

experience as a moment of “*Einblick*,” as a moment of retreat and contemplation, a moment in which the gaze turns inward. It is a moment that takes her from the world into the bedroom, from the bedroom into the self, from the self into insight-prolonging sleep:

Doch schnell ergriff sie eine seltsame Ahnung, ein freudig bängliches Erzittern, das in fromme Wünsche und Hoffnungen sich auflöste. Gerührt kniete sie nieder, sie wiederholte den Schwur den sie Eduarden vor dem Altar gethan. Freundschaft, Neigung, Entsagen gingen vor ihr in heitern Bildern vorüber. Sie fühlte sich innerlich wieder hergestellt. Bald ergreift sie eine süße Müdigkeit und ruhig schläft sie ein. (DW 122)

When read against the novel’s opening juxtaposition of ‘An’- to ‘Ausblick,’ this moment of “*Einblick*” once again raises the question of how differences in perception are linked to and determinate of the characters’ experience of the world, of each other, and of themselves. It invites us to wonder about the extent to which the characters are cognizant of their own attractions to and actions toward one another, and to ask how this (lack of) awareness may itself be determined by how they see themselves. But this isn’t all there is to be said about the closing sentences of Chapter Twelve, for you’ll notice that mention is made of “*Bildern*.” I shall address these pictures momentarily.

4.4 Self-perception Equals Selbstbild

Thus far, I have been arguing that the description at the end of Part One, Chapter Twelve of the sudden shift in Charlotte’s self-perception holds only if the bedroom in which she stands is conceived not simply as the literal architectural frame and space that it is, but also as a frame and space of the sort described by the narrator in the moss hut passage. The following questions remain to be determined. Can we say of the frames within the pictures of the landscape that Eduard sees that they have the same function as Charlotte’s bedroom? Can we speak of Charlotte’s self-perception in the terms that the narrator

speaks of the landscape that her husband sees? And finally, can we understand Eduard's perception as an act of "betrachten als"? I propose that the answer to these questions is yes. For while it's true that the text uses different vocabulary to describe Eduard and Charlotte's visual experiences, it also goes out of its way to describe husband and wife as seeing the same kind or category of things: namely, a patently real, or at least non-representational, object of phenomenal reality housed within an immaterial frame that must itself be considered an integral part of the perceived object. And so, by the transitive property of equality, we can indeed liken Charlotte's perception of herself framed by her bedroom and the pictures that Eduard sees of the framed landscape to one another in the above three ways. This means, firstly, that the frames of Eduard's landscape pictures *do* trace out a context that determines how Eduard sees the landscape that they enclose. I'll have more to say about what that context is in Section 5. Secondly, it means that we can legitimately refer to Charlotte's self-perception as a self-*image*, or *Selbstbild*, and attribute to it the pictorial qualities that characterize Eduard's view of the landscape from the hut. I want to address how this new understanding of Charlotte's experience sheds light on the construction of the final paragraph from Chapter Twelve before turning to explore what it means that the pictures that the baron sees can be equated with his wife's act of 'betrachten als.'

Recall that the narrator concludes his description of the bedroom episode with the observation that "Freundschaft, Neigung, Entsagen gingen vor ihr [sc. Charlotte] in heitern *Bildern* vorüber" (DW 122). Given, as we now know, that Charlotte can properly be said to see a framed *picture* of herself upon entering the bedroom, the use of "Bildern" here starts to look less and less like a coincidence. Indeed, we might conjecture that it is

only by means of an initial elision of the word ‘picture’ from the description of Charlotte’s perception of herself within the bedroom, and its subsequent metonymic displacement onto her understanding of what marriage entails that the text manages both to thematize the concept of pictures and to suggest an equivalence between the baroness’ self-perception, her act of ‘betrachten als,’ and the pictures that Eduard sees of the landscape. That this is the intent seems clear when further consideration is given to the relational link between the three elements of marriage contemplated by Charlotte. For while friendship may lead to and coexist with attraction, it seems odd that either would give rise to the negatively connoted need for renunciation. This peculiar enumeration of the components of marriage, when taken together with the past tense of the verb “vorübergehen,” suggests that these pictures don’t simply pass before Charlotte, but *supplant* one another in her thoughts: where marriage has for Charlotte recently turned on friendship, where it had been entered into because of an earlier attraction, it has now shifted to being about renunciation. I want to suggest that these *shifting pictures* are so represented primarily to direct the reader’s attention to the pictorial nature of Charlotte’s shifting perception of herself in her bedroom.

4.5 The Logic of ‘betrachten als’

I stated above that the third and final conclusion to be drawn from the determination that Eduard and Charlotte can be said to see the same category of things is that the pictures that the baron sees can be equated with his wife’s act of ‘betrachten als.’ In this section, I shall be arguing that the pictures seen by Eduard—and Charlotte—can be considered representational precisely because they are ‘Betrachtungen.’ To see why this is, let us

examine the semantics of the “sich als . . . empfinden und betrachten mußte” (DW 122), which is the text’s phrase for what I’ve been referring to as Charlotte’s self-perception. In the entry on ‘betrachten’ from Grimm’s *Deutsches Wörterbuch* we read:

beschauen ist inniger als besehen, und betrachten nachdenklicher als beschauen, . . . der beschauende sinnt nach, der betrachtende denkt nach. Man kann keine beschauungen machen, sie erfolgen von selbst, betrachtungen aber müssen gemacht werden.⁴³

This juxtaposition of ‘betrachten’ with ‘beschauen,’ a verb that interestingly appears only once in the *Wahlverwandtschaften*, and indirectly with ‘besehen’ reveals the following, seemingly contradictory qualities.⁴⁴ On the one hand, it establishes that ‘betrachten’ involves an element of passive visual perception: to see or perceive, which no one can be commanded to do, is not the same as to look, which a person can be directed to do. At the same time, however, the juxtaposition implies that ‘betrachten,’ from the Latin *considerare, contemplari, intueri*, also entails reflection and active cognitive engagement with the object of perception. ‘Betrachtungen,’ according to Grimm’s *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, aren’t given immediately and whole to perception. Indeed, one might even say that they constitute assemblages that “have to be made,” or put together, presumably from discreet parts. The final paragraph of Chapter Twelve, Part One confirms the actively constructed nature of ‘Betrachtungen’ by showing that these discrete parts consist of the object of perception and the contextual frame within which that object is enclosed. But the immediate and necessary, indeed almost forced quality of Charlotte’s perception also corroborates the passively perceptual nature of ‘Betrachtungen’ described

⁴³ Entry on “betrachten” in Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch* (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1854-1960) vol. 1, 1705-1708.

⁴⁴ The single occurrence of ‘beschauen’ comes in Chapter Two of Part Two of the novel: “Es [sc. ein größeres Portefeuille des Architects] enthielt zwar meist nur umrißne Figuren, die aber, weil sie auf die Bilder selbst durchgezeichnet waren, ihren alterthümlichen Character vollkommen erhalten hatten, und diesen, wie einnehmend fanden ihn die Beschauenden [sc. Charlotte und Ottilie]!” (DW 183)

by Grimm's *Deutsches Wörterbuch*. And yet, how can this logically be? Can there be thoughtful, productively engaged reflection that is simultaneously a passive perception? Can there be 'nachdenken' that isn't a durative process? And might this apparent contradiction at the center of 'betrachten' have something to do with the pictorial?

These questions become even more complex when we take into account the syntactical elements with which the text has combined 'betrachten.' For all of these additional elements work to relativize further the original notion of 'betrachten' as a passive visual perception. To start with, consider the "sich empfinden." Insofar as it seems to be synonymous with 'sich fühlen,' it suggests that while Charlotte's perception does indeed involve the senses, it is not a purely visual experience. But 'sich empfinden,' Grimm's *Deutsches Wörterbuch* tells us, is also less "sinnlich," "geistiger und abstracter" than 'sich fühlen.'⁴⁵ Second, there is the combination of 'als' with the reflexive form of 'betrachten,' which Grimm's *Deutsches Wörterbuch* defines as "sich ansehen." The implication is again of an involuntary *seeing*, but as the subsequent examples "ich betrachte mich als meines versprechens entbunden;" "betrachtet euch hier wie zu hause;" "er betrachtet sich als meinen freund" all demonstrate, what is seen pertains not to the perceived object's own characteristics—either physical or abstract—but rather to a necessary relational link between it and an entirely second kind of thing or idea. To put it differently: that which is 'seen' isn't so much perceived with the eyes as with the mind, in thought. Charlotte "regards" or "considers herself," she "takes herself to be" Eduard's wife would be possible translations of this reflexive use of "betrachten als." And yet, she also does none of these things, for what she does is simply find herself at a particular

⁴⁵ Entry on "empfinden" in Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch* (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1854-1960) vol. 3, 426.

moment (“nun”) in a particular place (her bedroom), where she is suddenly obliged *to be* in a particular state: to automatically feel and see herself as Eduard’s wife.

From the preceding semantic analysis of “sich empfinden und betrachten als,” we can observe that the picture that Charlotte sees of herself in her bedroom is representational to the extent that that which is enclosed within the frame is not seen for itself, but instead functions with the frame to put the viewer in mind of something beyond itself, something to which it nonetheless stands in a necessary and definitive relation. That something, that pictorial self that Charlotte experiences isn’t, therefore, merely co-emergent with the contextual frame that surrounds it: that pictorial self doesn’t in fact correspond to anything that could be perceived by the senses alone. For this reason, it can’t strictly speaking be considered an element of the phenomenal reality, or the ‘Wirklichkeit’ that is always also appearance as well as the sole precinct of the novel. But neither can that self that Charlotte is forcefully compelled to acknowledge be categorized as phenomenal reality’s opposite, ‘Schein.’ For within the text of the *Wahlverwandtschaften*, this term, along with its derivatives, is used to denote personal impressions or opinions as well as the way things can look or appear to someone. Often, though not always, the implication of ‘Schein’ is one of subjectivity, or stronger still, of illusion or willful deception. Such is the case, for instance, with Eduard’s comment to Charlotte that “die [Moos]hütte scheint [ihm] etwas zu eng” (DW 8). Here are additional examples:

Charlotte, so aufrichtig sie zu sprechen *schien*, verhehlte doch etwas. Sie hatte nämlich damals dem von Reisen zurückkehrenden Eduard Ottilien absichtlich vorgeführt . . . aber dieser . . . war nur glücklich in dem Gefühl, daß es möglich sei, eines so lebhaft gewünschten und durch eine Reihe von Ereignissen *scheinbar* auf immer versagten Gutes endlich doch theilhaft zu werden. (DW 22-23; emphasis mine, A.N.)

Wäre es [sc. das Gestein zur Mooshütte] denn leicht anders zu machen gewesen? fragte Eduard.

Gar leicht, versetzte der Hauptmann; sie [sc. Charlotte] durfte nur die eine Felsenecke, die noch dazu *unscheinbar* ist, weil sie aus kleinen Theilen besteht, wegbrechen; so erlangte sie eine schön geschwungene Wendung zum Aufstieg . . . (DW 34; emphasis mine, A.N.).

Sie [sc. Ottilie] hält freilich ihre Sachen sehr reinlich und gut, und *scheint* nur in diesem Sinn die Kleider zu wechseln. (DW 36; emphasis mine, A.N.)

Freilich ist es wunderbar, sie [sc. Ottilie] weiß vieles und recht gut, nur wenn man sie fragt, *scheint* sie nichts zu wissen. (DW 38; emphasis mine, A.N.)

Constituting neither a direct perception of phenomenal reality nor an instance of ‘Schein,’ the self that Charlotte experiences in her bedroom and the expansive landscape that Eduard sees from the hut exist *in the representational intermediary* between these two opposing realms: that is, at the very juncture where, as Wittgenstein puts it, perception can be said to coincide and collide with thought.

4.6 Wittgenstein on Aspect-Seeing (‘betrachten/sehen als’) and Pictures

Wittgenstein refers to these collisions of looking and thinking in Part Two of Section XI of the *Untersuchungen* as “ein Nachhall eines Gedankens,” before then elaborating further: “»Ein im Sehen nachhallender Gedanke« - möchte man sagen” (1053; PU II 549). And like Grimm’s *Deutsches Wörterbuch* and the *Wahlverwandtschaften*, he notes about such collisions that they one) reflect the perception not of “eine Eigenschaft des Objekts,” but “eine interne Relation zwischen ihm und anderen Objekten” (1056, a115; PU II 549c) and two) typify the many instances of ‘betrachten/sehen als’—which he also refers to as “das Bemerken eines Aspekts”—that he examines (1024, a3; PU II 518 and passim). By themselves, these points of overlap with Goethe’s novel shouldn’t be surprising: we have already noted that the kinds of perceptual shifts that preoccupy

Wittgenstein in Section XI are similar to the changes in the way Charlotte experiences herself in the bedroom and Eduard sees the landscape from the hut. What is striking, though, is Wittgenstein's move to compare aspect perception, or *sehen als*, to pictures: "Wie wäre diese Erklärung: »Ich kann etwas als das sehen, wovon es ein Bild sein kann«? . . ." (1036, a54; PU II 531) There are several things to note about this suggestion. First, in a discussion that not only uses *Vexierbilder* and abstract geometrical figures as its analytical tools of choice but that from the very start employs words such as "abzeichnen," "Zeichnung," "Illustration," this proposed "explanation" still nonetheless reads as a strikingly "Goethesque" moment.⁴⁶ Wittgenstein equates aspect, equates the identifying relational link perceived in a 'betrachten' or 'sehen als'—for example, the hat I see when I look at a figure of a triangle—not with a real exemplar of a hat, but with a picture of one. Second, it should be said that within the context of Section XI, the "explanation" presents an alternative to the misguided assumption of traditional—i.e. in the vein of Descartes—philosophers that perception as well as understanding necessarily involve interpretation, involve a process by which an observer works to see "ein Ding einer Deutung gemäß" (1035-1034, a52; PU II 530).⁴⁷ And finally, Wittgenstein goes on in the continuation of 1036, a54; PU 531 to lay out the implications of his explanation thus: "Das heißt doch: Die Aspekte im Aspektwechsel sind *die*, die die Figur unter Umständen *ständig* in einem Bild haben könnte." The sentence marks a shift in perspective from the outside to the inside of the picture, from a concern about its effect to

⁴⁶ Stephen Mulhall explores the place of pictures, and more particularly, of schematic drawings, or picture-objects in Wittgenstein's analysis in Chapter One of his seminal *On Being in the World* (16-17, 39). His book goes on to argue that the significance of the notion of aspect extends beyond pictorial representation, applying also to linguistic representation and psychological language. I do not address this singular insight of his monograph in this paper, but do draw on many of the observations he makes in his close reading of Wittgenstein's remarks on aspect.

⁴⁷ See Mulhall, *On Being in the World*, 10-13.

one about its construction. The aspect I see—whether the triangle as hat, Charlotte as Eduard’s wife, the landscape now as ‘Anblick,’ now as ‘Ausblick’—is still defined as a picture, but now from *inside* the representational space and in terms of the individual elements within that space. In terms of the above example of the figure of the triangle and the hat-aspect, these individual elements would be: the triangle figure at which I am looking; a certain set of circumstances and not other ones; a synchronic moment in time. The effect of the last of these three elements upon the first two means that the triangle-figure is shown along with an *unchanging* set of concrete circumstances, circumstances which, by perhaps including a woman’s head located beneath the triangle-figure, strip the triangle of its abstraction and lead it to be perceived—and now we are again speaking about the outward effect of the picture perceived as a whole—“ständig” as a picture of a hat and never as one of, say, a broken piece of glass.

Wittgenstein’s comments at 1036, a54; PU 531 thus suggest that we understand aspect as distinctly different, or at a conceptual remove, from the actual figure at which I look—a remove that is comparable in kind and quality to the one that exists between a pictorial representation and that which it successfully depicts. This is because what I *see* a figure *as* is for Wittgenstein, as for the text of the *Wahlverwandtschaften*, always crucially determined at any particular moment by the circumstances, or Umstände, in which I look at that figure.⁴⁸ Or, to put it another way: aspect is an amalgam in the same way that Goethe’s *Wahlverwandtschaften* has shown the pictures seen by Eduard and Charlotte to be. Aspect is a product of the intersection between the observer, the figure at which she looks, and the circumstances—or, in the language of the *Wahlverwandtschaften*, the frame—enclosing both observer and figure at any particular

⁴⁸ See Mulhall, *On Being in the World*, 13, 33, 36, 38-49, and *passim*.

moment. But, aspect isn't, for all that, an interpretative amalgam, since the observer doesn't need to process that at which she looks. Indeed, it is precisely because the observer simply and immediately sees the aspect when she looks at the figure that Wittgenstein describes aspect in terms of pictorial representations rather than of mental processes involving interpretation. As Wittgenstein explains:

Ein Dreieck kann ja wirklich in einem Gemälde stehen, in einem anderen hängen, in einem dritten etwas Umgefallenes darstellen. – So zwar, daß ich, der Beschauer nicht sage, »Das kann auch etwas Umgefallenes darstellen«, sondern »das Glas ist umgefallen und liegt in Scherben«. So reagieren wir auf das Bild. (1036, a55; PU II 531)

4.7 “Nun”: *The Temporality of Aspects*

I have been arguing that the passage about the baroness at the end of Chapter Twelve makes it clear that Charlotte doesn't see herself in an unmediated fashion, as she 'is,' but rather within a particular context that determines her perception of herself. At the end of Chapter Twelve that context is the frame and space of the bedroom that physically contain her, but also the associations that that structure and space bring with them. But it isn't simply that the bedroom marks the sudden appearance of a contextual frame. As in Wittgenstein, it is rather that the bedroom constitutes a *change* in contextual frame. This change is indicated on a syntactical level by the use of the adverbial “nun,” which helps the reader to hear a “vorher” and with it the questions of which frame or frames previously encased Charlotte and in which way it or they affected how she saw herself previously. Put otherwise: the “nun” begs the question of where and when Charlotte was standing *before* she reached her bedroom, and how she saw herself in those

surroundings.⁴⁹ Our interest here is not, however, so much in the particular answer to this question—namely the presence of the Captain, a presence that pervades most of the estate and in its imaginary, non-corporeal form even Charlotte’s room⁵⁰—as in the structural implications of the question itself: namely, that the understanding, perception, ‘*Betrachtung als*,’ aspect, or picture that Charlotte has or sees of herself is *always already* enclosed within and mediated by a frame or context.

We have seen that this mediated way of seeing is not peculiar to Charlotte. In the *Wahlverwandtschaften*, it is the general condition of all perception, or “perceptual thought,” including those instances of seeing to which we have already alluded in Section Three: namely, to Eduard’s and Ottilie’s. While this is readily apparent in the case of Ottilie, who begins the novel viewing things in relation to Charlotte and comes to see everything with respect to Eduard, it is less obvious but no less true of Eduard. At least, this is what I will be arguing in the next section, in relation first to the moss hut passage and then more broadly in relation to the baron’s instances of visual ‘*Theilnahme*.’

5 The Mediating Contexts of Eduard’s Perceptions

5.1 The Landscape as Seen from the Moss Hut

In Section Four, we established that the frames within the pictures that Eduard sees clearly determine, in the manner of a context, the particular way in which the baron sees the landscape enclosed within them. It’s now time to relate those frames to an actual context—a counterpart, as it were, to Charlotte’s bedroom. Here a problem arises. For as

⁴⁹ Wittgenstein similarly stresses the ‘before,’ ‘nun,’ and ‘after’ when he writes: “Mein Gesichtseindruck hat sich geändert; - wie war er früher; wie ist er jetzt? . . .” (1028-1029, a21; PU II 523).

⁵⁰ The mere anticipation of the Captain’s departure changes everything for Charlotte. Once Eduard announces his plans for the Captain’s employment elsewhere, Charlotte sees the Captain “mit wie andern Augen” (DW 106).

described by the narrator, the frames of Eduard's pictures coincide with those of the hut's door and window(s). But since these consist of nothing more than the openings that make it possible for Eduard to look outside in the first place, they can hardly be construed as the meaning-determining context of his perception. The problem can, I propose, be solved if we remember that the frames that we instinctively associate with the space of the hut's door and window(s) also belong to and make up part of the frame of the building itself. And it is the space traced out by that larger frame that then functions as the context of Eduard's perception of the landscape. Such an interpretation does not contradict the narrator's own description, since he speaks simply of "Rahmen," attributing them neither to the door and window(s) nor to the hut itself. And when the frames within the pictures that Eduard sees are conceived of as coinciding with the frame of the entire hut and its interior, a full-fledged context that has meaning and relevance for the landscape and the novel as a whole begins to emerge. Precisely this juxtaposition of the landscape as an expansive entirety with the much smaller interior space of the hut leads to the expression of the questions at the center of the novel: namely, how much space is enough space; how many people can or should the space of the moss hut accommodate; who, in effect, can be considered as rightfully belonging to the family?⁵¹ It

⁵¹ The cultural and literary shift away from the nobility and the world of the court to the bourgeoisie and their immediate family constitutes, as critics have remarked, the fundamental premise of the *Wahlverwandtschaften*. In light of these social shifts, critics have long perceived the novel to be centrally concerned with marriage. The exception is of course Walter Benjamin, who argues that the *Sachgehalt* of the novel is the "mythic" that pervades the characters and the landscape. Benjamin asserts: "Die Ehe kann in keinem Sinne Zentrum des Romans sein. . . . die Ehe [ist] im Geschehen nicht die Mitte, sondern Mittel" (Walter Benjamin, "Goethes Wahlverwandtschaften," *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhäuser [Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1974] vol. 1.1, 123-201, here: 131 and 189). Benjamin's adamant denial of the centrality of marriage for the novel means that he ends up devoting a significant part of his essay to addressing the issue and institution of marriage in relation to the novel and its characters. By contrast, the reading that I have set forth allows us largely to sidestep the theme of marriage. Furthermore, conceiving of Goethe's novel as one about family enables us to speak of Otilie and the Captain as more than just intrusive lovers, but as the adopted daughter and childhood friend that they in fact are. For a reading of the novel that seeks to reconcile Benjamin's assertion that the

is precisely the juxtaposition of the landscape as an expansive entirety with the hut's interior space that induces Eduard to complain of the cramped size of the latter: "Er [sc. Eduard] freute sich daran [sc. die Landschaft], in Hoffnung daß der Frühling bald alles noch reichlicher beleben würde. Nur eines habe ich zu erinnern, setzte er hinzu: die Hütte scheint mir zu eng" (DW 8). In response to Charlotte's mildly indignant observation that the hut accommodates the two of them comfortably enough, Eduard concedes that "für einen Dritten ist auch wohl Platz" (DW 8; emphasis mine, A.N.). Charlotte then settles the matter when, after asserting that there would also be room "für ein Viertes," she goes on to define the hut as an intimate space: "Für größere Gesellschaft wollen wir schon andere Stellen bereiten" (DW 8-9; emphasis mine, A.N.). As used here, "größere Gesellschaft" seems clearly to mean "larger gatherings."⁵² And yet, when we consider that Eduard and Charlotte use the gendered cardinals "einen Dritten" und "ein Viertes" to indicate his childhood friend and her adopted daughter respectively, "Gesellschaft" begins to take on the meaning of 'society,' as opposed to, say, family members, or at least those with whom one *chooses* ("Wahl") to share intimate spaces accommodating no more than four. Given this conversation, would it be too much to claim that Eduard's visual perception of the pictures of the landscape from within the hut—pictures that show it as an expansive 'Aussicht'—sets the events of the novel into motion? Perhaps. Still, it is worth noting that Eduard's follow-up to Charlotte's last comment above is to broach his desire to invite the Captain, whom he describes in terms of a brother (DW 9-10), to live

Wahlverwandtschaften is not an "Eheroman" with his lengthy discussion of marriage, see Burkhardt Lindner, "Goethe's 'Wahlverwandtschaften' und die Kritik der mythischen Verfassung der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft," *Goethes Wahlverwandtschaften: Kritische Modelle und Diskursanalysen zum Mythos Literatur*, ed. Norbert W. Bolz (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1981) 23-44, especially 36-37.

⁵² Cf. Wolf Kittler, "Goethes Wahlverwandtschaften: Sociale Verhältnisse symbolisch dargestellt," *Goethes Wahlverwandtschaften: Kritische Modelle und Diskursanalysen zum Mythos Literatur*, ed. Norbert W. Bolz (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1981) 230-259, here: 231.

with them. His proposal prompts the baroness to confess, in turn, her own ambivalent longing to pull her struggling adopted daughter Ottilie from boarding school in order to educate her personally at the estate.

5.2 Eduard's Displays of Visual 'Theilnahme' Re-examined

It is time, finally, to turn to those instances of Eduard's seeing which I first mentioned in Section 2, when I cited a series of examples in which Eduard responds in an immediate and emotional way to that which he observes. We have said that Ottilie's susceptibility to similarly emotional visual experiences coincides with a shift, over the course of the novel, both in her attachments and in her perceptual frame, from Charlotte to Eduard. The intersection of seeing and emotion in Eduard's own case does not so clearly fit a pattern, nor indeed does it always correspond to a shift in perceptual frame. I want to suggest, however, that the *vehemence* of his emotional reactions is structural and can be traced to such shifts. To see this, let us examine more closely one episode from the list of Eduard's emotionally charged perceptions: namely, his perception of Charlotte and her construction of the hut. About this perception, the narrator writes:

Übrigens hatte Eduard mit Charlotten allein weniger Stoff zur Unterhaltung, besonders seitdem er den Tadel ihrer Parkanlagen, der ihm so gerecht schien, *auf dem Herzen fühlte*. Lange verschwieg er was ihm der Hauptmann vertraut hatte; aber als er seine Gattin zuletzt beschäftigt *sah*, von der Mooshütte hinauf zur Anhöhe wieder mit Stüfchen und Pfädchen sich emporzuarbeiten; *so hielt er nicht länger zurück* . . . (DW 35; emphasis mine, A.N.).

This example is particularly interesting because, like the Charlotte passage, it points to a sudden change in Eduard's *picture* of Charlotte and her work on the hut: whereas he has earlier found Charlotte to be capable and the hut to be pleasing, he now rejects his wife and her project as problematic—despite the fact that nothing about either of them has

changed. The reason for this shift in Eduard's perception must therefore lie with a shift in frame. The text makes clear that the new frame is the Captain's comments to the baron about the technical shortcomings of Charlotte's design. Thus far, this reading of the passage fits into the schema of the immaterial frame as context sketched out earlier in the chapter. What's striking here is the force with which Eduard's perception has shifted. Indeed, the text seems to link the sudden spike in emotion to the fact of a shift in perceptual frame. Eduard's reaction to the shift in his perception of his wife and her design contrasts sharply with her own response to the one she experiences in her perception of herself with regard to her husband and their friend, the Captain. And yet, one might observe that both reactions constitute an instance of violence. Indeed, in the text of the *Wahlverwandtschaften*, it would appear that such shifts are marked by, and can only be navigated with, a measure of violence. Whereas Eduard directs his violence outward, at his partner, Charlotte directs hers inward, at herself. Of course, the fact remains that, unlike Charlotte, who, I would argue, is able to recognize and fulfill her duty to Eduard at the same time that she continues to have feelings for the Captain, Eduard cannot simultaneously recognize the truth of the Captain's criticisms and accept the merit of his wife's efforts. These two perceptions cannot coexist for Eduard precisely because he remains unaware of the existence of the contextual frame that would force him to recognize the contingency of his perceptions.

But though Eduard may lack insight into the embedded nature of his perceptions, the fact remains that he and the other characters have little say in how they see the people and things in front of them. Our analysis of pictures and of 'betrachten als,' of the moss hut and bedroom passages has shown that though the way the characters perceive the

people and things around them is far from subjective, it is also involuntary: the force of context. One might say that we have, in a way, come full circle, and must acknowledge Benjamin's mythic understanding of the world of the novel, in which the main characters, who take themselves to be, in their cultivation, free of the (religious) tradition that would otherwise provide them a necessary foundation, are condemned to live under the force of a "drohend[e]," "mythische Natur."⁵³ The important difference between our reading and Benjamin's is, however, that the characters do not bring this fate down upon themselves (only) through their complicity with nature, and (only) as a result of their negligence and celebration. For more than their actions, more than what they (do not) do or say, it is how the characters see whom or what they look at in any particular moment that determines the course of their lives. Charlotte marries Eduard, but comes to see the Captain as "den Freund" before finally being forced to see herself as Eduard's wife; Otilie is initially oriented toward Charlotte, but comes to see things with respect to Eduard; the Captain comes to visit Eduard, but ends up preferring Charlotte's company. But of course it's Eduard's suddenly altered perceptions of his wife Charlotte and her adopted daughter Otilie that constitute *the central perceptual shifts* around which the plot is organized. His new way of seeing them contrasts sharply with how he previously saw the two women several years earlier, when Charlotte had sought to make a match of her adopted daughter and the baron. Eduard, we know, couldn't see the latter because he saw the former so clearly as his lover. What becomes confirmed over the course of the novel is that it wasn't so much love that drove Eduard to see Charlotte rather than Otilie as his future wife in that moment, but rather the contextual circumstances of their reunification after a

⁵³ Walter Benjamin, "Goethes Wahlverwandtschaften," 132.

long separation, his own memory of their youthful love, and the sudden possibility of capturing that which had been forbidden them.

6 The Place of Architecture in the Wahlverwandtschaften

I began this paper by directing attention to the moss hut passage, in which Eduard sees the park landscape, first as an ‘Anblick’ and subsequently as what I’ve called an ‘Ausblick.’ I then asked you to consider the windows that Eduard imagines himself to have in his breast and brow, before offering a reading of the episode that finds Charlotte in her bedroom. Through these scenes, I suggested, the *Wahlverwandtschaften* examines the fundamentally embedded way in which we see the things and people around us always as representations, or pictures, that are co-emergent with a perceptually immaterial frame that encloses them. Via the text’s description of Charlotte’s self-perception as an act of ‘betrachten als,’ I likened the novel’s understanding of picture to Wittgenstein’s notion of aspect. I argued, finally, that that perceptually immaterial frame turns out to be comparable to what Wittgenstein emphasizes as the circumstances, or context(s) in which a perceived object—as well as its observer—is situated. I would like now to draw attention to the thoroughgoing prominence of place afforded to architecture not only in the passages mentioned above, but throughout the *Wahlverwandtschaften*. Note, for example, that Charlotte and Eduard, with the help of the Captain, spend their days (re)structuring the park landscape and the buildings located within it.⁵⁴ And while Otilie doesn’t actively seek to participate in these projects, she inevitably becomes

⁵⁴ Cf. Wolf Kittler, “Goethes Wahlverwandtschaften: Soziale Verhältnisse symbolisch dargestellt,” 231. Kittler comprehends Eduard and Charlotte’s activities as the bourgeois management of property, a management that aims at “Erneuerung” and modernization, rather than at “Produktion im Sinne von Arbeit oder Zeugung.” See note 7 of this manuscript.

drawn into them, as we will see in a minute.⁵⁵ Observe also that it is an architect, first introduced to the reader in Chapter Fourteen of Part One as the Captain's former "Zögling," who steps into the space—not only on the level of the novel's construction,⁵⁶ but also in terms of Charlotte and Ottilie's lives on the level of the story—vacated by the Captain and Eduard at the beginning of the second half of the novel. I want to suggest that this thematization of architecture on the level of plot and character is part of a broader strategy within the text of Goethe's novel to use architecture to draw the reader's attention to a pivotal, but often overlooked pictorial, or aspectual, component of human visual perception. More particularly, Goethe's novel repeatedly exploits architecture's basic function as a frame for enclosing people, things, and spaces in order to trace out, render visible, and highlight the importance of the contextual frames that determine how objects are perceived. We have seen that it is not by chance that the frames of a door, window(s), a bedroom, and indeed an entire hut overlap precisely with the immaterial frames of the pictures that Eduard and Charlotte see. Consider, as further evidence for this assertion about the systematic way in which the text deploys architecture to make a point about perception, the following passage from Chapter Three of Part Two about Ottilie's visit to the newly refurbished and redecorated small side chapel. It is, the narrator informs us, a space that she knows well ("einem bekannten Raum," DW 191), but which she hasn't seen since before its completion, when she helped the architect paint the figures of the angels—angels that, significantly, "sämtlich an Ottilien . . . gleichen" (DW 190)—on its domed ceiling. And so, it is "mit einem unerwarteten *Anblick*" that she

⁵⁵ One example of this is Ottilie's suggestion that the friends build the "Lustgebäude" behind the forest, "auf der höchste Fläche der Anhöhe" (DW 79).

⁵⁶ Breithaupt, *Jenseits der Bilder*, 155-156.

is “überrascht” when she walks “zur Thüre der Capella” (DW 191; emphasis mine, A.N.).

We are told, more particularly, that:

Durch das einzige hohe Fenster fiel ein ernstes buntes Licht herein: denn es war von farbigen Gläsern anmuthig zusammengesetzt. Das Ganze erhielt dadurch einen fremden Ton und bereitete zu einer eigenen Stimmung. Die Schönheit des Gewölbes und der Wände ward durch die Zierde des Fußbodens erhöht, der aus besonders geformten, nach einem schönen Muster gelegten, durch eine gegossene Gipsfläche verbundenen Ziegelsteinen bestand. Diese sowohl als die farbigen Scheiben hatte der Architekt heimlich bereiten lassen, und konnte nun in kurzer Zeit alles zusammenfügen. Auch für Ruheplätze war gesorgt. Es hatten sich unter jenen kirchlichen Alterthümern einige schöngeschnitzte Chorstühle vorgefunden, die nun gar schicklich an den Wänden angebracht umherstanden. (DW 192)

What is initially striking about this passage is the way in which the narrator remarks that the chapel considered as a whole looks different to Ottilie at the same time that he repeatedly emphasizes its sameness, or continuity, over time. Indeed, the narrator goes so far as to assert in the first sentence of the next paragraph that Ottilie knows all of the individual elements that together make up the room. The apparent paradox of Ottilie’s visual experience of her surroundings can be explained away if we take the narrator to allude to a change in the organization of the parts of the chapel, to the way that those parts have been reassembled by the architect. But the passage’s real interest is rather that almost all of the changes that the architect has made to the chapel have been made to its borders. That this is the central point becomes clear when we consider that even the one alteration to the interiority of the space itself—namely to the choir chairs—involves their displacement to the room’s perimeter. To put it another way: the architect has not altered the chapel itself so much as *the very surface of its frame*. I say surface because a significant part of what the architect, whom the text and Ottilie repeatedly refer to as a “Künstler,” does involves “Verzierung” and “Erheiterung” (DW 181), involves work that requires him to put his “malerisches Talent” to use (DW 182). This is an architect who

does not build so much as paint: the floors with a decorative pattern, the walls “mit einer hellern bräunlichen Farbe,” the windows with “farbigen Gläsern,” and of course the domed ceiling with the Otilie-like angels. I shall return to these angels shortly. For now, we can observe that the effect of the architect’s artistic intervention is twofold. It leads, firstly and as has been noted above, to a change in the way the chapel as “[G]anze[s]” is perceived. That this shift is caused by changes to the surface of the frame is most clearly visible in the colored window glass that allows sunlight to permeate the room. Second, the architect’s surface decoration of the chapel’s architectural frame induces Otilie to gaze directly at the frame that holds her:

Otilie freute sich der bekannten, ihr als ein unbekanntes Ganze entgegentretenden Theile. Sie stand, ging hin und wieder, sah und besah; endlich setzte sie sich auf einen der Stühle, und es schien ihr, indem sie auf- und umherblickte, als wenn sie wäre und nicht wäre, als wenn sie sich empfände und nicht empfände, als wenn dieß alles vor ihr, sie vor sich selbst verschwinden sollte . . . (DW 192)

It is difficult to know what to make of this peculiar passage that begins by figuring Otilie as “Maria im Gehäuse”⁵⁷ and ends with a description of her in the throes of what seems to be an out-of-body experience, or trance. Critics such as Wolf Kittler, David Wellbery, and Fritz Breithaupt uniformly understand Otilie’s trance to be directly precipitated by her perception of and incorporation into the images of the painted angels that depict her. For these critics, the trance reflects Otilie’s experience of the dissolution of her being into an image.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ See the commentary to this passage in Johann Wolfgang Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke. Briefe, Tagebücher und Gespräche*, ed. Friedmar Apel et al. (Frankfurt a. M.: DKV, 1994) vol. 11, 1001.

⁵⁸ Cf. Kittler, “Goethes Wahlverwandtschaften: Sociale Verhältnisse symbolisch dargestellt,” 243. Kittler argues that the architect’s representations of Otilie demonstrate “die Ausbeutung des Begehrens durch die Kunst.” Kittler observes that rather than attempting to win the real Otilie for himself, the architect sublimates his desire by transforming her into pictures of angels—creatures whose main characteristic is the absence of desire—on the chapel’s dome. He goes on to state that Otilie, for her part, “geht” in these pictures “ein.” Her “Entrückung” is, thus, “nichts anderes als das Einswerden mit den begierdelosen Gestalten . . . Der Künstler und die Frau bilden einander wechselseitig ab: der Architekt malt Bilder, die

While I agree that the above passage describes Otilie's experience of being made into an image, I disagree that the architect has effected that transformation by means of the drawings of the angels, drawings that the passage does not in fact mention specifically.⁵⁹ Rather, there is a more fundamental way in which Otilie becomes an image here. Consider that by stepping through the chapel's doors—doors that despite their weight nonetheless open easily before her (DW 191)—she effectively steps through a frame into a picture that has been expressly constructed for her, much as the “Eingang” “vor dem Gesetz” is built specifically for the “Mann vom Lande” who in Kafka's short parable eventually withers away in front of it. Once inside and gazing directly at the frame of the chapel, Otilie experiences *herself as picture*: as housed within a frame that determines how she is perceived. It is not, therefore, any particular *picture of herself*, not the angels on the ceiling, but rather the chapel's entire frame that effects Otilie's awareness of her own pictoriality. The confrontation with her own purely pictorial nature places Otilie into a trance, and in no state to make sense of that which she sees. How could she, since the picture she sees shows only her within the empty, stylized frame of the chapel, and is otherwise devoid of contextual content?

Otilies Züge tragen, und Otilie gleicht sich diesen Bildern an.” Kittler then goes on to suggest that the “Entrückung” is but one instance in a gradual process by which the architect transforms the young woman into an image not of just any mother, but apotheoses her as the mother of god.

Like Kittler, David Wellbery emphasizes the “Entrückung” as Otilie's complete integration into the architect's image of her, an image that transforms her maternal aura into the object of an aestheticized cult. Wellbery writes: “[s]itting in the finished chapel, Otilie feels herself absorbed into the painted figures above her, as if her very being were that of an image.” Cf. David E. Wellbery, “Afterword,” Johann Wolfgang Goethe, *Goethe's Collected Works*, ed. David E. Wellbery (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1995) vol. 11, 283-296, here: 291. See also David E. Wellbery, “Die Wahlverwandtschaften,” here: 297, 315.

And finally, see also Breithaupt, *Jenseits der Bilder*, 178-181. Breithaupt contends that the novel equates Otilie with beauty itself. As such, she is that which makes phenomena possible. Breithaupt writes of beauty, and therefore implicitly of Otilie, that it “kann kein Selbstbewußtsein haben, kann sich nicht begrenzen auf ein Bild, denn sie ist die ›Bildlichkeit‹ selbst.” Evidence of this, according to Breithaupt, is the fact that when confronted by the architect's rendering of her in the chapel, Otilie becomes literally destabilized.

⁵⁹ Furthermore, this is not the first time that Otilie encounters the images of the angels. Her initial confrontation with them takes place when she helps the architect paint them.

It is only later, “nur als die Sonne”—which I read as an extension of the frame and its effects into the space of the chapel—“das bisher sehr lebhaft beschienene Fenster verließ,” that Otilie “erwachte . . . vor sich selbst und eilte nach dem Schlosse” (DW 192). And it is only upon reaching the garden, from where the wreaths of asters and sunflowers that now hung in the chapel had come, that the space within the frame of that structure becomes associated with the details that enable it to function as context for Otilie. It is only upon catching a glimpse of these flowers that the “Künstler-Grille” becomes filled with a particular contextual content, and she sees the picture of herself in the chapel as a “gemeinsame . . . Grabstätte” for herself and the absent Eduard (DW 193). In a curious parallel to the perceptual experience that Charlotte has in her bedroom at the end of Chapter Twelve of Part One, the architectonic structure of the chapel as frame thus forces Otilie, who had earlier managed to lose herself in its restoration, to think also of Eduard:

Sie *mußte* sich dabey der geräuschvollen Geschäftigkeit erinnern, mit welcher Eduard ihr Geburtstagfest gefeyert, sie *mußte* des neugerichteten Hauses gedenken, unter dessen Decke man sich soviel Freundliches versprach. Ja das Feuerwerk rauschte ihr wieder vor Augen und Ohren . . . (DW 193; emphasis mine, A.N.)

Unlike the passages about Charlotte’s bedroom or the moss hut, in which architectural structures are not themselves the primary focus of the action, this passage about the chapel foregrounds built structures as the means by which the text traces out the contexts that surround all objects of perception. The architect’s modifications to the chapel provide Otilie with an experience of the building’s interior shell rather than of its depth or interiority; they induce her to look at the surface of the architectural frame. In doing so, she becomes momentarily aware of its function and of the effect that it has upon her

in a way that perhaps Charlotte and certainly Eduard never are.⁶⁰ It is significant, however, that this comprehension is not immediate, but delayed, for it points to yet another fundamental characteristic of architecture exploited by the novel.

7 Architecture and Distraction, Pictures and Absorption

Walter Benjamin reflects upon this characteristic of architecture in the concluding paragraphs of his essay “Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit”⁶¹ when he observes that architecture can only be approached in a state of distraction, through a tactile and optical familiarity that comes through sustained use and exposure. Or, to put it differently: architecture is a diffuse mode of art that requires an oblique kind of attention. In this as well as in its ability to remain relevant “von jeher,” architecture, Benjamin notes in the essay’s penultimate paragraph, differs from Greek tragedy, the epic, and panel painting, which all require the spectator to be attentive, focused, and contemplative. But the definitive term in Benjamin’s list of contemplative art forms, the one that establishes contemplative art as a category into which the above named forms of art can all be subsumed, has already been introduced in the preceding paragraph, as part of a legend about a Chinese painter who has just completed a piece of artwork. The term Benjamin uses for that artwork is of course “Bild,” and unlike the other forms of art that he mentions, it’s unspecific enough to also

⁶⁰ Ottilie’s subsequent journal entry testifies to her lingering awareness of architecture. While she does not reflect directly upon the surface of the architectural frame, she does muse about an architect’s relation to the spaces he builds. Her comments reveal an awareness of the architect’s function to produce “Räume” to be occupied, “Räume” to enclose people and objects. The paradox of the architect’s profession, according to Ottilie, is that he cannot occupy the structures he builds. The end of the entry, which records the thoughts Ottilie had while sitting in the chapel, reveals that those thoughts are directly prompted by her perception of the chairs that the architect had placed along the opposing walls of the chapel’s frame (DW 193-94).

⁶¹ Walter Benjamin, “Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit,” *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhäuser (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1974) vol. 1.2, 435-505, here: 504-505.

refer to representation in general. Thus, it is with representation that Benjamin contrasts architecture, and from the representational arts that he excludes it. But what's most notable, for Benjamin, about the finished picture of the legend is the reaction it elicits from the painter when he looks upon it ("beim Anblick"). Benjamin writes: "Der vor dem Kunstwerk sich Sammelnde *versenkt sich* darein; er *geht* in dieses Werk *ein*."⁶² Unlike (undecorated) architecture (as well as the filmic medium that is the main focus of his essay), representation and representational forms of art, Benjamin asserts, demand absorption. It is thus not by chance that the *Wahlverwandtschaften* deploys architecture to trace out the perceptibly immaterial frames within the pictures that its characters see.

8 What about Actual Pictures, Actual Pictorial Representations?

Insofar as they make architecture's non-representational, non-absorptive character explicit, Benjamin's concluding remarks to the "Kunstwerk" essay serve as a nice theoretical coda to the novel's overall depiction of architecture, and to its depiction of Otilie's experience of the chapel's architecture in particular. But there is another reason why I have chosen to dwell at some length on Benjamin's comments: his approach from architecture toward an understanding of pictures and representation as *demanding* of absorption dovetails with Wittgenstein's own emphasis in Section XI on the *capacity* of pictures to absorb their viewers.⁶³ Together, Benjamin and Wittgenstein provide us with the very terms with which to develop our analysis as we move the discussion away from

⁶² Recall that Wolf Kittler uses the same verb to characterize Otilie's experience of what I have described as the painted chapel. See note 63.

⁶³ I follow Stephen Mulhall in taking absorption and the absorptive capacity of pictures to be one of the central points of Wittgenstein's study of aspect in Section XI. For Wittgenstein, the absorptive quality of pictures reveals itself in our tendency to behave toward the pictorial representation of an object as we would toward the object itself. See 1026-1027, a8-a13; 1041, a75; 1042, a82; 1043, a86; PU II 520-521, 536-538 and *passim*. See also Stephen Mulhall, *On Being in the World*, Chapter One, especially 20-28.

architectural and contextual frames to ask, in the final sections of this chapter, about the role that actual pictures have in the lives of the novel's characters.⁶⁴ If it's the case, as I have been arguing, that the characters can be said to perceive the phenomenal world around them as pictorial representations because they rarely see things un-embedded within a context that determines what those objects are, then what might it mean for the characters to look at actual objects of representation? What is the status of actual artifacts of representation in the characters' not only phenomenal, but also mediated world? How do such artifacts function? What do the characters see, when they look at them? My contention is that the novel uses the two episodes involving the *tableaux vivants* to describe the experience of actual representational objects in terms of absorption, or the extent to which viewers can see representations as the very people or objects that these representations are intended to depict.⁶⁵ This absorbed way of perceiving actual representations as the objects they depict will in fact turn out to correspond to Eduard's perception of the landscape now as an 'Anblick,' now as an 'Ausblick:' in both cases, that which is perceived stands at a conceptual, or in the language of the moss hut passage, at a pictorial remove from the physical, material object itself.⁶⁶ And, finally, this absorbed way of looking at actual representations contrasts with seeing them within a context that emphasizes the immediate materiality of the individual colors, lines, and shapes.⁶⁷ For such *unabsorbed* seeing constitutes an awareness of pictures as objects that function to portray other objects; it is to view pictures as an artifact or a tool of

⁶⁴ Mulhall, *On Being in the World*, 20-28. Mulhall takes a question similar to this one, but addressing the role played by pictures in human life, to be a main concern of Wittgenstein's discussion of aspects, and more particularly, his analysis of "sehen als" or "betrachten als." See 1042-1043, a84; PU II 538.

⁶⁵ See note 63.

⁶⁶ See 1027, a11-a12; PU II 521 and Mulhall, *On Being in the World*, 17, 24-5.

⁶⁷ See 1028-1030, a21-a27; PU II 523-524 and Mulhall, *On Being in the World*, 8, 17, 27-29.

representation.⁶⁸ This unabsorbed way of seeing, whereby the viewer is confronted with the picture-in-itself will turn out to correspond to Eduard's assumption that he sees the objects of phenomenal reality in-themselves, in a direct and un-embedded manner.⁶⁹ I shall be arguing, moreover, that contrary to what critics such as Wellbery and Breithaupt have claimed holds true for all pictures within the *Wahlverwandtschaften*, those seen in an absorbed state don't stand in a derivative relation of substitution to the depicted original.⁷⁰ Rather, a relation of identity pertains between the depicted original and these pictures, insofar as the latter succeed in making the absent person or object, as the text of the *Wahlverwandtschaften* puts it, "gegenwärtig" (DW 176, 179) to the observer. A clear instance of the ability of pictorial representations to transform absence into a kind of presence can be found in an exchange between Eduard and Otilie from about halfway into Part One of the novel. I want to look briefly at this exchange, before proceeding to an analysis of Charlotte's modifications to the churchyard and finally of the episodes involving Luciane's and Otilie's *tableaux vivants*.

8.1 Eduard's Reaction to Otilie's Locket of her Father

In Chapter Seven of Part One, Eduard asks Otilie to remove the "Miniaturbild" of her father from around her neck. Observing that "[d]as Bild ist ungeschickt groß," the baron worries that "ein unvorgesehener Stoß, ein Fall, eine Berührung Ihnen [sc. Otilie] schädlich und verderblich seyn könnte" (DW 76). He makes the request to his companion

⁶⁸ See previous note and 1042-1043, a81, a84-a87; PU II 537-538 and Mulhall, *On Being in the World*, 18-27.

⁶⁹ See note 66.

⁷⁰ Cf. David E. Wellbery, "Die Wahlverwandtschaften," especially 300-301. Emphasizing the relation of pictures to death, Wellbery argues that pictorial representations reveal the objects they depict to be absent even as they continue to depict them. See also Fritz Breithaupt, *Jenseits der Bilder*, 134-35, 144, 163-65, 168-69, and passim.

after the two have made the off-trail climb up to the old, hidden mill, and while they are still in the tentative, early phases of their growing attraction. In his 1985 essay on the novel, David Wellbery perceptively notes that part of what motivates Eduard's tender concern is the desire to rid himself of Otilie's father, who in this scene literally separates the future lovers.⁷¹ But such an interpretation seems precisely to contradict the deconstructivist understanding of written and verbal signifiers as necessarily pointing to an absence that otherwise informs Wellbery's essay.⁷² For Wellbery's observation about Eduard's motives makes sense only if the picture that Otilie wears has the capacity to render her brave father—whom we are told she hardly knew—present, or *gegenwärtig*, to her and therefore a threat to Eduard. That is, Wellbery's reading strikes a chord only if Otilie's picture of her father manages to *overcome* the starkest and most permanent of absences: namely, death itself. Now, I don't mean at all to suggest that his picture renders Otilie's father fully or ever-present to her. My point is that his representation has the ability to sometimes—when she is actively gazing at or otherwise preoccupied with it—make him present to her in varying degrees.⁷³

8.2 Charlotte's Beautification of the Graveyard and the Ensuing Debate

Strongly implied by Eduard's wish for Otilie to take the locket with her father's picture from around her neck and by critics' interpretations of this wish, the capacity of pictures and representations in general to make that which they depict effectively alive, or present, to the observer is explicitly broached by the architect within the context of a larger debate

⁷¹ Wellbery, "Die Wahlverwandschaften," 305.

⁷² Wellbery, "Die Wahlverwandschaften," 299-303 and *passim*.

⁷³ See 1043-1044, a88-a90; PU II 538-539 and Mulhall, *On Being in the World*, 22.

with Charlotte about the proper manner to relate the dead.⁷⁴ The debate takes place in the opening chapter of Part Two of the novel, and is prompted by the arrival of a lawyer who has been sent by his clients to contest the baroness' project to transform the parish graveyard into a churchyard where non-mourners as well as mourners might spend time. As the project consists in removing the gravestones to the surrounding walls before then leveling the sinking graves and covering them with clover, one might say that Charlotte chooses to emphasize the broader, *diesseitige*, aesthetic setting of the mourners' experience as well as its connection back to the church itself.⁷⁵ In doing so, however, she effectively denies what the lawyer and his clients claim: that the meaningfulness of mourning lies in the parishioners' experience of literally visiting with their dearly departed, who reside *beneath* the earth. As the lawyer points out, Charlotte's beautifying action renders it impossible for the townspeople to locate the bodies of the dead and sit in their presence. "Es ist nicht sowohl vom Andenken die Rede, als von der Person selbst, nicht von der Erinnerung, sondern von der *Gegenwart*," he chides her (DW 176; emphasis mine, A.N.).

Upon being invited by Charlotte to give his opinion of the matter, the architect approves of her actions, but not before sketching out the many different techniques—from ash-filled urns to be clasped to the bosom to sarcophagi that ensure presence through embalming to protected burial crypts—with which various cultures and societies commemorate the dead. His account has the beneficial effect of, if not of historicizing, then certainly of relativizing his patroness' project, and thus of extricating it from a binarily oppositional position vis-à-vis the "traditional" model of grave and marker to

⁷⁴ For a thorough and insightful reading of the various positions—denial, forgetting, commemoration—represented by the debaters with regard to this issue, see Breithaupt, *Jenseits der Bilder*, 156-163.

⁷⁵ Wellbery, "Die Wahlverwandtschaften," 304, 309 and Breithaupt, *Jenseits der Bilder*, 158.

which the attorney and the family he represents cling. But having appeased Charlotte, the architect then goes on to distinguish his position from his employer's—and from the lawyer's conception of gravestone and grave as a single unit composed of marker and the loved one's bodily presence⁷⁶—by asserting that the best means for occasioning the memory of the dead, the best memorials are monuments that have been constructed and erected by artists such that the structures have a certain permanence. The architect's monuments thus seem to differ from Charlotte's "unhinged" gravestones not so much in kind, but in size, substance, and the ability to withstand time and the elements.⁷⁷ It subsequently becomes clear, though, that the architect's position is more nuanced than that when, after several turns in the discussion, he contends that, of the many monuments that artists might create, "doch bleibt immer das schönste Denkmal des Menschen eigenes Bildniß. Dieses giebt *mehr als irgend etwas anders* einen Begriff von dem was er war; es ist der beste Text zu vielen oder wenigen Noten" (DW 178; emphasis mine, A.N.).⁷⁸

Where Charlotte's alterations to the graveyard underscore the surface or horizontal space above the ground and the broader environment in which the act of

⁷⁶ For a detailed reading of the lawyer's position along these lines, see Breithaupt, *Jenseits der Bilder*, 157-59, 161-62.

⁷⁷ While Breithaupt initially likens the architect's monuments to Charlotte's displaced gravestones, he goes on to emphasize that the young man's position constitutes a third way of relating to the dead: namely, by substituting them with a sign that effectively kills them a second time (*Jenseits der Bilder*, 160-161).

⁷⁸ As will become clear, my reading takes the novel to follow the architect in distinguishing between monuments and pictures, or portraits, of the dead, and in privileging the latter over the former as a means of representation that more readily conjures presence out of absence. By contrast, Fritz Breithaupt's analysis collapses the two kinds of representation together. Dismissing the ability of portraits to do as the architect claims, Breithaupt writes: "Auch die von dem Architekten gepriesenen individuellen Denkmäler und die Bildnisse . . . geben die Individualität und das Leben des Abgeschiedenen preis, indem sie die Individualität von dem Toten ablösen und auf die individuelle Gestaltung seines Denkmals übertragen und damit das unteilbare Individuum teilen" (*Jenseits der Bilder*, 161). Admittedly, the first permanent photographic image would not be taken for another seventeen years after the publication of the *Wahlverwandtschaften*, but one wonders nonetheless if Breithaupt would level the same charge against a photograph of a deceased loved one.

remembering the dead occurs; where the neighboring family's attorney focuses primarily on the hidden, buried remains of the dead, the architect's portrait renders it unnecessary to look to either of these spaces as the locus of an absorbed engagement with a loved one. For unlike signs such as monumental obelisks, columns, or indeed Charlotte's "disembodied" gravestones, a person's portrait functions as a *natural* sign that minimizes the difference between itself and that to which it points. Indeed, one might say that a person's portrait doesn't point so much as it shows, that it seems to carry its meaning in itself. Charlotte herself affirms this quality of the human image when she observes that "Das Bild eines Menschen ist doch wohl unabhängig; überall wo es steht, steht es für sich . . ." (DW 179).

But an absent or departed person's "Begriff," or idea, doesn't yet signify his or her presence. What hinders presence, or the artist's ability to capture the "lebende Form" isn't, as the architect concedes, only that families commission most portraits long after the sitter has passed the prime of his or her life, or indeed at the very moment of death, when the subject has just unexpectedly passed away (DW 179). Even portraits which have been ordered in a timely manner often misfire in their attempt at "Beleb[ung]," failing to strike the observer in the very way that they fail to strike Charlotte. She confesses namely: "sie [sc. Bildnisse] scheinen mir immer einen stillen Vorwurf zu machen; sie deuten auf etwas Entferntes, Abgeschiedenes und erinnern mich wie schwer es sey, die Gegenwart recht zu ehren" (DW 179). One might sum up Charlotte's comments about portraits by saying that her logical assertion of their independence, of their status as natural signs isn't borne out by her experience of them. Put differently: although she knows that portraits do not signify in the manner of arbitrary signs, she

experiences them not only to be so, but also to be dead artifacts that draw attention to themselves as tools of representation, thereby highlighting the absence rather than conjuring the presence of the pictorial signified.

The gap between Charlotte's comprehension and her experience of portraits can be reconciled, however, when we recognize that Charlotte speaks in this general way about pictures of those whom she, in all likelihood, has not known (personally), people to whom she has little or no connection. In point of fact, even the pictures of those whom we know well rarely become present or alive to us for more than the briefest of interludes. Seldom will an observer remark that an aesthetic representation—of any kind, in any medium—is “speaking to him.”⁷⁹ The ubiquity and lasting duration of these experiences is, however, less relevant than the fact that such experiences always have the potential to occur and—to varying degrees and under certain circumstances—do occur. It is to five variously successful attempts to give “lebende Form” (DW 179)—quite literally—to pictorial representations that I want to turn in the upcoming section about the *tableaux vivants*.

8.3 The Tableaux Vivants: Congruence and an Adequate Concept of the Depicted

Original

Much has been written about the *tableaux vivants* in which Luciane and later Ottilie, along with other members of the household, reenact well-known paintings and historically significant events.⁸⁰ For those actively participating in the entertainment,

⁷⁹ See note 73.

⁸⁰ For a historical contextualization of the practice of *tableaux vivants*, see Peter McIsaac, “Rethinking Tableaux Vivants and Triviality in the Writings of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Johanna Schopenhauer, and Fanny Lewald,” *Monatshefte* 99 (2007): 152-176, especially 159-163. See Raimar Stefan Zons, “Ein

“de[r] Sinn dieser Kunststücke” (DW 220) consists in being seen not for oneself, but rather as him or her whom one has been assigned to portray. As the Graf, or count, explains, the participants of the *tableaux vivants* effectively challenge themselves to be extraordinary actors. I say extraordinary because while their costumed efforts—efforts that will be revealed upon a theatrical stage by the drawing of a curtain—make the comparison to theater players self-evident, Luciane and Otilie won’t in fact be doing any acting. As participants of the *tableaux*, they are tasked to bring their respective characters to life *without* being able to draw, over the course of an entire play, upon a repository of alternating facial expressions, gestures, and actions that are themselves embedded in a larger plot. The significance of the *tableaux vivants* for the argument I’ve been making about pictures and representation lies precisely in this element of stillness. The requirement against movement of any kind would seem to ensure that Luciane and Otilie won’t succeed in portraying anyone but themselves. It also suggests that the *tableaux vivants* provide the best possible case against which to test, albeit in reverse, the capacity of aesthetic representations to transform absence into presence by making those people or things whom they are meant to depict real, or alive, to the observers. Given everything

Denkmal voriger Zeiten: Über die Wahlverwandtschaften,” *Goethes Wahlverwandtschaften: Kritische Modelle und Diskursanalysen zum Mythos Literatur*, ed. Norbert W. Bolz (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1981) 323-352, especially 343-44, for his distinction between “Schein” and falsche[r] Schein.” The insight of Fritz Breithaupt’s contribution in *Jenseits der Bilder* is to contrast Luciane’s *tableaux* to Otilie’s with respect to their relation to ‘Schein.’ However, he understands “Schein” as “Augenlicht,” or the ability to see. Breithaupt argues that all three of Luciane’s *tableaux* not only depict blindness, but also actively hinder vision in the following ways. First, in pretending to be the painters’ figures, Luciane does not return their bodies to them, but replaces them with her own, thereby transforming them from phenomena to “Phantomenale.” That is, Luciane’s pictures “zelebrier[en] die Gegenwart der Erscheinung, ohne in dieser dem Akt des Erscheinens sein Recht zu gewähren.” Second, Breithaupt claims that her pictures are flat, lacking a deep structure, or what he calls “[etwas] Bedeutungsvolles, Dahinterliegendes, . . . einen tieferen Sinn.” By comparison, Otilie’s pictures stage light and its effect as that which enables the world to be perceived as phenomena. Otilie is indispensable to the two *tableaux* because it is she who releases the light when she removes the cloak covering the baby Jesus. With this action, Breithaupt contends, Otilie inserts her *tableaux* into a temporal progression, thereby opening up a future of possibilities that relativizes the substitutional logic inherent to all pictures (165-173). For Nils Reschke’s interpretation of the *tableaux*, see note 6 of this manuscript.

that we've said thus far about the *tableaux*, it should be apparent that they don't quite amount to portraiture. For where portraits, as we have seen, function as natural signs that require nothing—not even context—beyond themselves, nothing beyond a “willing” observer and a modicum of likeness to the original in order to “give a concept of [that] original,” Luciane, Ottilie, and the others who make up the *tableaux* don't have it so easy. As “signifiers” that aren't entirely self-same with the figures whom they portray, Charlotte's niece and adopted daughter depend upon “manche mühsame Anordnung” (DW 217)—costumes, props, lighting, a set—to help them capture first the concept and then the presence of their given roles.

But even when one takes these disparities in appearance between individual signifiers and their respective signifieds into account, the world of the *Wahlverwandtschaften* turns out to be expressly suited to depicting not just the world found within one particular picture, but the world within pictures in general. The general—and striking—suitability of the world of the novel as a medium for the pictorial one is reflected in the text by the material, bodily stature of the novel's characters. As the count puts it: “Ich finde . . . hier so manche wohlgestaltete Personen, denen es gewiß nicht fehlt, malerische Bewegungen und Stellungen nachzuahmen.” If his verdict applies first and foremost to Luciane, as she herself quickly realizes and the narrator confirms—

Ihr schöner Wuchs, ihre volle Gestalt, ihr regelmäßiges und doch bedeutendes Gesicht, ihre lichtbraunen Haarflechten, ihr schlanker Hals, alles war schon wie aufs Gemälde berechnet . . . (DW 217)

—it doesn't apply to her alone. It turns out that the architect bears a strong resemblance to the sad standing soldier whom he mimes in the *tableau* of van Dyk's “Belisar.” But the strongest indication of the degree to which the world of the novel finds itself already

implicated in the pictorial one that its characters seek to reproduce is the way in which the text often blends or completely displaces its descriptions of the paintings to be depicted into or onto its description of the *tableaux* that are presented to the audience. Consider, for example, that rather than describing how the “Belisar” *tableau* appears to the audience on the night of the performance, the text simply refers the reader to the description of the painting that it has provided two paragraphs earlier: “Der Abend kam herbey und die Darstellung wurde vor einer großen Gesellschaft und zu allgemeinem Beyfall ausgeführt. Eine bedeutende Musik spannte die Erwartung. *Jener Belisar eröffnete die Bühne*” (DW 218; emphasis mine, A.N.). Upon consulting that earlier description of the “Belisar” painting/*tableau*, the reader cannot but be struck by the gradual shift in the terms of reference. The text begins its description of the painting/*tableau* by informing the reader which character in the novel will depict which figure in the original painting. By the end of the paragraph, however, the text has done away with the distinction between actor and role entirely, and describes the Belisar painting/*tableau* only in terms of van Dyk’s figures.

Man suchte nun Kupferstiche nach berühmten Gemälden; man wählte zuerst den Belisar nach van Dyk. Ein großer und wohlgebauter Mann von gewissen Jahren sollte den sitzenden blinden General, der Architect den vor ihm theilnehmend traurig stehenden Krieger nachbilden, dem er wirklich etwas ähnlich sah. Luciane hatte sich, halbbescheiden, das junge Weibchen im Hintergrunde gewählt, das reichliche Almosen aus einem Beutel in die flache Hand zählt, indeß eine Alte sie abzumahlen und ihr vorzustellen scheint, daß sie zu viel thue. Eine andre ihm wirklich Almosen reichende Frauensperson war nicht vergessen. (DW 218)

It is true that these kinds of displacements are not strictly carried through to the second and third *tableaux*, which the text will deploy primarily to underscore the reasons for why Luciane’s *tableaux* ultimately do not succeed in bringing the depicted figures to life. What the accounts of all three of Luciane’s *tableaux* do share is a straightforwardly

descriptive tone, along with the use of the impersonal pronoun ‘man’ and the simple past. These stylistic and grammatical elements lend the accounts an air of overt objectivity typical of perceptual reports. The implication is that the accounts of the *tableaux* convey nothing more than what the audience sees. And the effect of this implication is to make the physical congruencies, both general and specific, between the people reenacting the paintings and those depicted within them appear both natural and logical. And yet, do not such congruencies contradict and defy our usual expectations in significant ways? We usually expect a picture to resemble that piece of the world that it depicts, and not the other way around. And we certainly don’t expect our piece of the world to coincide in any regular way with an artist’s representation of some other part of the world, or more unlikely still, with her rendering of a scene from a myth or story. But it is precisely by means of the peculiar reversal of our expectations that these paragraphs about the physical congruencies between the world of the novel and the paintings to be staged affirm the inherent function and power of pictures to convey, almost in the manner of portraits, to the observer an adequate concept of the original they seek to represent. With these paragraphs, the novel seems to assert that, even when not fully absorbed, we don’t usually perceive the pictures at which we look simply as artifacts. Even when not fully absorbed by the pictures at which they look, observers usually see pictures as *pictures of someone or something*. Though its materiality as signifier does not recede in such instances, the picture qua artifact is coterminous with that which it portrays, and is usually referenced with respect to the person or object portrayed. But, again, an adequate “concept” of the original doesn’t yet signify or guarantee presence, of which there will turn out to be three variously successful modes. Within the context of the *tableaux*

vivants, or a parlor entertainment that makes a game out of representation by transforming what is normally the signified into the signifier, these three modes correspond to what the text labels: “die Gegenwart des Wirklichen,” “die Gegenwart des Scheins,” and/or “die Wirklichkeit als Bild.” The following two sections address first Luciane’s and then Otilie’s *tableaux* with regard to these three modes of rendering an absence present.

8.3.1 Luciane’s Tableaux Vivants: *Luciane’s Body and the Materiality of Representation*

Of Luciane’s *tableaux vivants*, we are told that they ultimately fail to make that which she aims to portray fully present to the audience, *despite* the perfection of the material and formal elements: “Die *Gestalten* waren so passend, die *Farbe* so glücklich ausgetheilt, die *Beleuchtung* so *kunstreich*.” If this observation is startling, it is because its two parts necessarily seem to contradict one another, leaving the reader to wonder how this conclusion can be. The narrator goes on to clarify: it is not that the spectators do not take to Luciane’s pictures. The audience is absorbed. Indeed, the pictures affect it such that “man [glaubte] sich fürwahr in einer andern Welt zu sein” (DW 219). But the text is also careful to point out that the viewers are disturbed in their absorption by an uncanny “Gegenwart des Wirklichen statt des Scheins” (DW 219). It subsequently becomes apparent from the descriptions of the second and third *tableaux* that for “die Gegenwart des Scheins” to have pertained, Luciane would have had to disappear entirely into her chosen roles. In doing so, she would have become for the audience more than the embodiment of the painters’ original figures. She would have enabled it to see *only* the imaginary roles—hence “Schein”—that she has taken on: namely, van Dyk’s “junge

Mädchen im Hintergrund” or Poussin’s “ohnmächtig hingesunkenen Königin,” and von Terburg’s “herrliche” “Tochter.”

But, of course, Luciane does none of these things. As a result, what confronts the audience in each of her *tableaux* is “d[as] Wirkliche[.]” It is important to remember that “the real” is not “die Wirklichkeit” that is always already appearance. “The real” is not phenomenal reality. It is not, as critics have argued, Luciane herself, though she certainly seeks in each of the *tableaux* in which she participates to present herself to the audience “in ihrem höchsten Glanze” (DW 220). Rather “the real” comes about as an *effect* of this project. For in showcasing her body, she effectively directs the audience’s attention to the material elements of the *tableau* itself, and by extension to its status as a signifier, or tool of representation. Thus, one might say that Luciane’s body literally blocks the audience’s view of the painters’ original figures, that her corporeality hinders their presence, which is the presence of “Schein.” The text suggests this much when it tells us that a spectator reacts to Luciane’s third *tableau* by calling out the words “die man manchmal an das Ende einer Seite zu schreiben pflegt: *tournez s’il vous plait*” (DW 220). The implication of his words is that the absence of “Schein” renders the third *tableau* comparable to the mediated, non-pictorial medium of text.⁸¹

But this is not all. For as long as the painters’ original figures are prevented from coming into their own, as it were, they remain *captured in the tableaux*. The insight of Luciane’s vanity is to appear to the audience *as Luciane in the clothing and guise* first of

⁸¹ Michael Fried comments that the phrase “*tournez, s’il vous plait*” suggests that “the words are in fact *read off*, if not from the composition as such, then from the circumstances of its representation” (*Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot* [Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1980] 173). Whereas Fried understands this move toward textuality as evidence that “there can be no such thing as an absolutely untheatrical work of art” (173), it is important to keep in mind that we are dealing here with Luciane’s *tableaux vivants*, and that Otilie’s *tableaux vivants* follow a very different logic.

van Dyk's young woman, then of Poussin's Esther, and finally of von Terburg's admonished daughter. In mobilizing these figures to stage a self that is always also a material component of the *tableaux*, Luciane in effect stages the signifier alongside a signified that it holds trapped. And it is this juxtaposition of a signifier that has been elevated above its signified that constitutes "the real" that interferes with the audience's ability to become fully absorbed in Luciane's *tableaux*.

The text's word for the hindrance of the one aspect by the other in the context of Luciane's *tableaux* is "statt." In many ways, the genitive preposition calls to mind the 'nun' that the narrator uses to mark the sudden change in Charlotte's self-perception in Chapter Twelve of Part One. Like the 'nun,' the "statt" implies that objects of phenomenal reality can shift between one or more aspects. And like the 'nun,' the 'statt' brings these aspects into relation to one another. It should be noted, however, that the aspects involved in perceptual shifts marked by 'nun' constitute more or less interchangeable values that, though often contradictory, are not necessarily incompatible. Recall that although Charlotte suddenly perceives herself as Eduard's wife, her feelings for the Captain persist. The same cannot be said of the contrast between "die Gegenwart des Wirklichen" and "die Gegenwart des Scheins." These two perceptions don't just amount to inherently different types of aspects. They signify ones that—as the 'statt' makes plain—are also linked to one another according to an exclusionary logic. Unlike Charlotte's self-perceptions or the pictures of the landscape that Eduard sees, the two aspects under which Luciane's *tableaux* can be perceived cannot co-exist. The radical difference in these two competing and irreconcilable aspects works to distinguish Luciane's *tableaux* from the objects of phenomenal reality with which we were

concerned in Sections 1 through 5 as well as from the actual pictures at which we looked at earlier in the second half of the paper. At the same time, it alerts us to the potential danger of pictorial representation. That danger is not, as many readings of the novel have suggested, inherent to all pictures as such, for Goethe's novel, as I read it, shows us that pictorial signification very often succeeds in making that which it portrays alive, or present, to the observer. As Luciane's *tableaux* demonstrate, the danger lies instead in the perversion and reification of the signifier to the detriment of the signified.

8.3.2 Otilie's Tableaux Vivants: *The Staging of an Inherent Aspect*

It should be noted, though, that the episodes involving Luciane's *tableaux* constitute *the only moment* within the novel at which the danger of this very particular kind of substitutional logic is broached and put on display. This danger is, moreover, immediately relativized and shown to be avoidable in the subsequent passages about Otilie's two *tableaux vivants*. The relativization is all the more powerful because the text seems initially to assert a similarity between Luciane's and Otilie's *tableaux vivants*.⁸² Through Charlotte's eyes, we learn that the "oft . . . wiederhohlt" nativity theme of the first *tableau* means that the picture which Otilie presents can hardly be expected to produce "einen neuen Eindruck davon" (DW 233). Put differently: such pictures, as a result of their ubiquity, are no longer viewed as that which they depict, but simply as representational artifacts. And as such, they have become indistinguishable from any other object of ordinary phenomenal reality, and not necessarily worthy of aesthetic

⁸² Most of the secondary literature on Goethe's *Wahlverwandtschaften* emphasizes the difference between Luciane's and Otilie's *tableaux vivants*. For an interesting exception see Norbert Puszkar, "Frauen und Bilder: Luciane und Otilie," *Neophilologus* 73 (1989): 397-410, who argues that both women are perceived to be most attractive when silent (404-407).

contemplation or absorption. But the validity of this initial assertion of similarity is explored and ultimately contested by the language of the passage, which moves between taking note of obvious resemblances—Otilie’s first *tableau*, like Luciane’s, is characterized as an exercise in presenting “die Wirklichkeit als Bild”—and discerning fine contrasts—unlike “die Gegenwart des Wirklichen” which characterized Luciane’s *tableaux* and which “eine Art von ängstlicher Empfindung hervorbrachte,” “nichts,” not even the child Otilie holds, “die Betrachtung störte, wenn der Blick auf der *scheinbaren* Mutter verweilte . . .” (DW 233-34; emphasis mine, A.N.). Indeed, the repeated use of “scheinen” to describe the action of that which is presented to Charlotte by Otilie’s *tableaux* serves to distinguish them from those of her rival.

In diesem Augenblick schien das Bild festgehalten und erstarrt zu sein. Physisch geblendet, geistig überrascht, schien das umgebende Volk sich eben bewegt zu haben, um die getroffenen Augen wegzuwenden, neugierig erfreut wieder hinzublinzen und mehr Verwunderung und Lust, als Bewunderung und Verehrung anzuzeigen; obgleich diese auch nicht vergessen und einigen ältern Figuren der Ausdruck derselben übertragen war. (DW 234)

That the world of the novel finds itself here once again—and to an even greater degree—implicated in the art historical one of pictures is indicated by the way in which the text, omitting with the exception of Otilie’s the names of the still-life actors, describes the composition of the *tableau* entirely in terms of the roles depicted. But if this inherent congruency between the phenomenal world and the (art) historical one explains the characters’ inclination to attempt to reenact the paintings, as in Luciane’s case, it doesn’t ensure the attempted *tableaux* from remaining mere tools of representation rather than actually representing. What allows Otilie’s two *tableaux* to transcend their status as artifacts is the architect’s three-fold decision to stage the interplay of darkness and light in the first *tableau*, to show how light becomes color in the second *tableau*, and to cast

Ottilie as Marie in both pictures. Critics have written at length about how the architect's manipulation of light in the presentations provides insight into the process of 'Erscheinen,' which I understand in the context of Ottilie's *tableaux* as the successful emergence or, alternatively the appearance, of the imaginary Maria aspect that she takes on. But recent interpretations have had little to say about the importance of Ottilie's presence in the *tableaux*, beyond her relation to the staging of the light.⁸³ And yet, the text tells us that Ottilie, more than any of the other figures, including the "schöner frischer Knabe" who portrays the baby Jesus, ensures the success of the *tableaux*: "ohne Ottilien war die Sache [sc. *tableaux*] nicht auszuführen" (DW 232). Initially, this condition for success is presented as the architect's singular idealization of Ottilie: "Der junge Mann hatte sie [sc. Ottilie] in seinem Sinne zur Mutter Gottes erhoben" (DW 232). But in successfully appearing to the audience as the figure whom he has cast her, Ottilie, it turns out, does more than simply fulfill the architect's personal vision of her. Now, it's been established that 'Wirklichkeit,' or an object of phenomenal reality seen in itself—i.e. an Ottilie seen only in her attempt to play Maria and consequently also as a material signifier within a dead artifact—doesn't supplant 'Schein' understood as the imaginary aspect, the role that an actor takes on within the context of a play or picture —i.e. the figure of the Virgin Mary—in these last two *tableaux*. Nonetheless, the text clearly states that something of Charlotte's adopted daughter does in fact also "schein" through to the audience as they look upon Maria. The narrator remarks that

Ottiliens Gestalt, Gebärde, Miene, Blick übertraf aber alles was je ein Mahler dargestellt hat. Der gefühlvolle Kenner, der diese Erscheinung gesehen hätte, wäre in Furcht gerathen, es möge sich nur irgend etwas bewegen, er wäre in Sorge

⁸³ Friedrich Nemec suggests that the description of Ottilie as "scheinbare Mutter" can in fact be understood to signify a mother who 'gives birth' (based on the root '-bar') to 'Schein.' See Friedrich Nemec, *Die Ökonomie der "Wahlverwandtschaften"* (München: Fink, 1973) 85-88, especially 86.

gestanden, ob ihm jemals etwas wieder so gefallen könne. Unglücklicherweise war niemand da, der diese ganze Wirkung aufzufassen vermocht hätte. Der Architekt allein, der als langer schlanker Hirt von der Seite über die Knieenden hereinsah, hatte, obgleich nicht in dem genauesten Standpunct, noch den größten Genuß. Und wer beschreibt auch die Miene der neugeschaffenen Himmelskönigin? Die reinste Demuth, das liebenswürdigste Gefühl von Bescheidenheit bei einer großen, unverdient erhaltenen Ehre, einem unbegreiflich unermesslichen Glück, bildete sich in ihren Zügen, sowohl indem sich ihre eigene Empfindung, als indem sich die Vorstellung ausdrückte, die sie sich von dem machen konnte was sie spielte. (DW 234)

If the architect's conception of the ideally drawn portrait functions as a baseline of the ability of pictorial representations to make a depicted absence present to an engaged observer, and if Luciane's three *tableaux* can be said to have ultimately failed when compared to this baseline, the above paragraph seems to suggest that Ottilie's two *tableaux* exceed that baseline.⁸⁴ Ottilie's pictures succeed in depicting the imaginary ('Schein') along with a reality that functions to enhance that 'Schein.' The audience sees the Virgin Mary and they see Ottilie. But precisely because Ottilie seems particularly suited to playing Mary, her presence seems to add a kind of surplus to the staging, a surplus that enhances its "truth" and ultimately Maria's felt presence. Thus it would be more apt to say that though the audience sees and realizes that they see Ottilie, they also see her as the Virgin Mary. And they perceive her thus partly because, in constructing these two final *tableaux* of Mary with the baby Jesus, the architect has achieved nothing less than the staging of Ottilie's inherent, built-in aspect, an aspect that almost everyone who encounters her remarks upon and that the novel repeatedly insists upon: namely, Ottilie *as* the Virgin Mary.

⁸⁴ For a reading that stresses the function of the *tableaux vivants* as characterizations of Luciane and Ottilie, see Birgit Jooss, "Lebende Bilder als Charakterbeschreibungen," *Erzählen und Wissen: Paradigmen und Aporien ihrer Inszenierung in Goethes Wahlverwandtschaften*, ed. Gabriele Brandstetter (Freiburg i. Brsg.: Rombach, 2003) 109-136, especially 130-31.

9 Concluding Remarks

In Section XI of Part Two of the *Untersuchungen*, Wittgenstein argues that we see the objects around us not in their materiality or parts, but rather as a whole, or always already conceptualized under an aspect. I have been arguing that this necessarily embedded way of perceiving objects and people is also examined in Goethe's *Wahlverwandtschaften*, albeit in distinctly different terms. Rather than under an aspect, the *Wahlverwandtschaften* suggests that we see the objects and people in front of us always as pictorial representations that are co-emergent with a perceptually immaterial frame that surrounds them. I then went on to suggest that this frame amounts to what Wittgenstein highlights as the circumstances, or context(s), in which the perceived object is presented to the viewer. In the second half of the paper, I examined the extensive role played by architecture in the novel, arguing, with the help of Benjamin's essay on "Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit" that it is because architecture is an anti-representational and diffuse mode of art, one that does not demand absorption, that the novel turns to it as a means of tracing out the perceptually immaterial frames of the conceptual picture that its characters see. The last sections of the chapter were devoted to an analysis of some of the real pictures, real artifacts, and real representations that the novel's characters observe: namely, Otilie's picture of her father, Charlotte's contested renovation of the graveyard, and the five *tableaux vivants* staged by Luciane and Otilie. Using Benjamin's notion of absorption, I argued against the prevailing critical stance that the novel understands and shows real objects of representation to be derivative substitutes of an absent original that they inevitably fail to depict.

Conclusion

I began Chapter One by directing attention to the way in which philosophers such as Rogers Albritton and Norman Malcolm attempt to secure the possibility of certain knowledge about other minds—or, in the case of Stanley Cavell, of acknowledgement and acceptance—by bracketing off, in one way or another, the capacity of pretend and pretense to invalidate criterial evidence for psychological states. I contrasted such approaches to pretense with the view that J. L. Austin takes of it: namely, that it constitutes a real, but manageable worry. I then argued that in many of the passages from the writings on the philosophy of psychology, Wittgenstein's own understanding of pretense closely resembles Austin's. That is, for Wittgenstein as for Austin, pretense and the doubt that it engenders crop up in everyday life, but they do so against the backdrop of those many instances in which language is used truthfully. And in those instances in which deception rears its head, it manifests itself in circumscribed cases in which something in the circumstances of the situation leads us to harbor a specific doubt about concrete matters such as opportunity and motive. Though their positions approximate one another, I noted that Austin and Wittgenstein's analyses of pretense differ in one important aspect: tone. Where Austin's remarks reassure his reader that the problem of pretense is both recognizable and controllable, the repetitive, insistent, and restless quality of Wittgenstein's observations suggest an enduring dissatisfaction with what are effectively the same responses that Austin has provided to the skeptic. I suggested that Wittgenstein's restlessness leads us to wonder about the force of the particular grammatical interventions he takes himself and Austin to have offered to the skeptic. Through a close reading of the passages, I demonstrated that the interventions succeed in

reminding the skeptic about the following two things. First: if her skeptical worry is the worry about pretense, then the worry cannot address a gap in knowledge between the other and herself. That is, the worry about pretense cannot logically be the worry that I have knowledge of myself that she cannot have. This means that the worry about pretense is not the standing, metaphysical worry about the separateness of our bodies and minds, but only the localized worry about doubt in particular situations. Second: in showing the skeptic that we are equipped with the means to resolve the uncertainty about pretense in individual cases by attending to the circumstances that arouse our doubt, Austin and Wittgenstein's grammatical reminders dislodge one significant element of the conventional depth, or vertical, model of the 'inner' and the 'outer,' namely the element that takes the 'inner' to be the locus of meaning and evidence. Nonetheless, Wittgenstein's restlessness implies that his grammatical interventions do not go far enough: or, rather, that they fail to address the fact that the worry about pretense is directed at expressive uses of language: that is, at first-person avowals and self-ascriptions. I went on to trace Wittgenstein's response to this primitive or psychological aspect of the worry about pretense in Section XI of Part Two of the *Untersuchungen*, arguing that his final response to the skeptic may be found in the final paragraphs of that segment.

Chapter Two continues the line of thought developed at the end of Chapter One. It proposes, namely, that Lohenstein's two mourning plays *Agrippina* and *Sophonisbe* may be read as paradigmatic examples of a seventeenth-century understanding of pretense, one that doesn't comprehend it as the only plausible explanation for a mismatch between the 'inner' and the 'outer.' In addition to an analysis of the language used to characterize

pretense as well as an examination of ‘cases of pretense’ in Lohenstein’s play about the interactions between Lohenstein’s heroine and her son, I examined the third *Reyen* in *Agrippina*, in which the sea- and mountain-goddesses attempt to determine the cause of Agrippina’s shipwreck by looking either beneath the sea or at its surface. I showed that Lohenstein, with the help of the sea-goddesses, demonstrates that the truth about Agrippina’s shipwreck can only be discovered through a surface model of understanding and perception, one that locates meaning not in the depths, or ‘inner,’ of the sea, but outside of it in the actions of Nero. A second example of a seventeenth-century text in which pretense and sincerity are clearly not understood to be binary opposites of one another is Lohenstein’s *Sophonisbe*. Reading through the play, one cannot but be struck by how often the queen and her family members cross-dress. While it may be tempting to understand these instances of cross-dressing as instances of disguise and deception, we saw that Sophonisbe herself questions such an interpretation. As she tells her son prior to switching garments with him, the context of the religious sacrifice in which they are to take part prevents their altered appearances from being considered instances of deception. And neither, my reading suggests, can the subsequent episodes of transvestism—in which Sophonisbe appears on stage already in drag only to immediately reveal her identity and her gender—be understood as such. Rather, these passages show that drag has the power to construct ‘identity’ as a surface, or context-determined, performance. Within the seventeenth-century world of Lohenstein’s *Sophonisbe*, a world in which surfaces are taken both to constitute and to belie (gender) identity—a world, then, very unlike the one against which Judith Butler argues in texts such as *Gender Trouble* and *Bodies that Matter*—cross-dressing allows Lohenstein’s heroine not so much to play more effectively

the part of an erotic woman enamored with her enemy, as to become and be this woman. Or, to put it in structural terms: these passages about cross-dressing, sex, and gender are folded onto questions about disguise and deception as they relate to Sophonisbe's affects and intentions. Precisely this constellation of issues brings Chapter Two full-circle, back to Wittgenstein's discussion of pretense. Against the background of these two examples from Lohenstein's seventeenth-century texts, Chapter Two may be seen to confirm my contention from Chapter One that Wittgenstein's post 1945 writings about pretense should be understood as a project to reclaim something like the distinction between 'dissimulatio' and 'simulatio'—a distinction with which the seventeenth century still continued to operate, even as it began to apply the single term "Verstellung" to both categories of pretense, and to reverse the necessary equation of all mismatches between 'outward' expression' and the 'inner' with acts of pretense.

In Chapter Three, I turned to an analysis of Goethe's novel *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*. I began my reading by directing attention to the narrator's peculiar claim that Eduard, and indeed, all of the characters of Goethe's novel, perceive the objects in front of them not as the objects themselves, but rather as pictures that are coterminous with a perceptually immaterial frame that is internal to the picture itself. I suggested that this notion of picture might fruitfully be likened to Wittgenstein's understanding of aspect. I then went on to suggest that the immaterial frame within Goethe's pictures would correspond to Wittgenstein's notion of the context, or circumstances, under which objects of perception are always given to a viewer. I suggested that both Goethe and Wittgenstein understand the frame and the context,

respectively, to be central to the determination of an object's meaning, or to the way in which it is perceived by a viewer. In the second part of the chapter, I explored the importance of architecture for the novel. Drawing on Benjamin's essay about "Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit," I argued that architecture's status as an anti-representational and diffuse mode of art enables the novel to exploit it as the means for tracing out and marking the perceptually immaterial frames of the pictures that its characters see. In the final sections of my reading, I examined the novel's conceptualization of the real artifacts and representations that intrude into its characters' lives. These included Otilie's picture of her father, Charlotte's renovation of the churchyard, and the five *tableaux vivants* staged by Luciane and Otilie. Once again drawing upon Benjamin, I sought to contest the position, widespread in the criticism of the *Wahlverwandtschaften*, which suggests that the novel takes pictorial representations to be derivative substitutes of an absent original that they cannot portray in a way that would make the object present, or alive, to the viewer.

In terms of the larger argument, Chapter Three may be seen to address the question about the unity of Section XI of Part Two of the *Untersuchungen*. That is, it makes clear that what connects the issues of aspect and pretense is the question of how to understand context. Furthermore, it reveals that even as eighteenth-century thinkers such as Goethe began to define pretense as the mismatch between the 'outward' behavior and 'inner' psychological states—an assertion that necessarily works with a depth model of understanding that not only locates meaning in the 'inner,' but insists that the purpose of the 'outer' is to give expression to the 'inner'—they continued to rely on a surface model of understanding in other areas of thought.

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